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GREECE AND BABYLON

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GREECE AND BABYLON

A COMPARATIVE SKETCH OF MESOPOTAMIAN, ANATOLIAN AND HELLENIC RELIGIONS

BY

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TO

DR. HENRY WILDE

THE FOUNDER OF THE WILDE LECTURESHIP
IN NATURAL AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
THESE FIRST-FRUITS OF HIS ENDOWMENT
ARE DEDICATED
BY
THE FIRST WILDE LECTURER

EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD,
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GREECE AND BABYLON.

CHAPTER I.

Inaugural Lecture.

The newly-elected holder of a University professorship or lectureship, before embarking on the course of special discussion that he has selected, may be allowed or expected to present some outlined account of the whole subject that he represents, and to state beforehand, if possible, the line that he proposes to pursue in regard to it. This is all the more incumbent on me, as I have the honour to be the first Wilde Lecturer in Natural and Comparative Religion—the first, that is, who has been officially charged by the University to give public teaching in the most modern and one of the most difficult fields of study, one that has already borne copious fruit, and will bear more in the future. I appreciate highly the honour of such a charge, and I take this opportunity of expressing my deep sense of the indebtedness of our University and of all students of this subject to Dr. Wilde for his generous endowment of this branch of research, which as yet has only found encouragement in a few Universities of Europe, America, and Japan. I feel also the responsibility of my charge. Years of study have shown me the magnitude of the subject, the pitfalls that here—more, perhaps,

than in other fields—beset the unwary, and the multiplicity of aspects from which it may be studied. Having no predecessor, I cannot follow, but may be called upon rather to set, a precedent.

One guidance, at least, I have—namely, the expressed wishes of the founder of this post. He has formulated them in regard to Comparative Religion in such a way that I feel precluded, in handling this part of the whole field, from what may be called the primitive anthropology of religion. I shall not, therefore, deal directly with the embryology of the subject, with merely savage religious psychology, ritual, or institutions. It is not that I do not feel myself the fascination of these subjects of inquiry, and their inevitableness for one who wishes wholly to understand the whole of any one of the higher world-religions.

But we have in the University one accomplished exponent of these themes in Mr. Marett, and until recently we have been privileged to possess Professor Tylor; and Dr. Wilde has made his wishes clear that the exposition of Comparative Religion should be mainly an elucidation and comparison of the higher forms and ideas in the more advanced religions. And I can cheerfully accept this limitation, as for years I have been occupied with the minute study of the religion of Greece, in which one finds much, indeed, that is primitive, even savage, but much also of religious thought and religious ethic, unsuspected by former generations of scholars, that has become a rich inheritance of our higher culture. He who wishes to succeed in this new field of arduous inquiry should have studied at least one of the higher religions of the old civilisation *au fond*, and he must have studied it by the comparative method. He may then make this religion the point of departure for wide

excursions into outlying tracts of the more or less adjacent religious systems, and he will be the less likely to lose himself in the maze and tangle of facts if he can focus the varying light or doubtful glimmer they afford upon the complex set of phenomena with which he is already familiar.

And the Greek religion serves better than any other that I know for such a point of departure, the influences being so numerous that radiated upon it. It had its own special inheritance, which it fruitfully developed, from the North, from its proto-Aryan past, and which we shall be able to define with greater clearness when comparative religion has done its work upon the religious records of the early Aryan peoples. Also, the Hellene had many intimate points of contact with earlier and alien peoples of the ancient Mediterranean culture whom he conquered and partly absorbed, or with whom he entered into intellectual or commercial relations. Therefore the religions of the Minoan Age, of the Anatolian peoples, of Egypt, and finally of Babylon and Persia, come inevitably to attract the student of the Hellenic.

As far, then, as I can see at present, I may have to limit my attention in the lecture-courses of these three years during which I fill this post, to the phenomena of the Mediterranean area, and these are more than one man can thoroughly elucidate in a lifetime, as the manifold activity in various departments of this field, attested by the Transactions of our recent Congress of the History of Religions, will prove to those who read them. And I shall endeavour in the future to follow out one main inquiry through a short series of lectures, as this is the best method for a reasoned statement of consecutive thought. But I propose in this lecture to sketch merely in outlines the salient features of some

of the religions of the Mediterranean area, and hope thereby to indicate the main problems which the student of comparative religion must try to solve, or the leading questions he must ask, and thus, perhaps, to be able to suggest to others as well as to myself special lines of future research and discussion.

What, then, are the questions which naturally arise when we approach the study of any religion that has advanced beyond the primitive stage? We wish to discover with definiteness what is the idea of divinity that it has evolved, in what forms and with what concepts this idea is expressed—whether, for instance, the godhead is conceived as a vague "numen," or as a definite personality with complex character and functions, and whether it is imagined or presented to sense in anthropomorphic forms.

The question whether the religion is monotheistic or polytheistic is usually answered at a glance, unless the record is unusually defective; but in the case of polytheism careful inquiry is often needed to answer the other morphological questions that press themselves upon us, whether the polytheism is an organised system of co-ordinated and subordinated powers or a mere medley of uncorrelated deities. If the former, whether the unifying tendency has developed in the direction of monotheism or pantheism.

Again, the study of the attributes and functions ascribed and the titles attached to the deity will enable us to answer the questions concerning his relation to the world of Nature, to the social sphere of law, politics, and morality; and in this quest we may hope to gain fruitful suggestions concerning the interaction of religion, social organisation, and ethics. We shall also wish to know whether the religion is dogmatic or not—that is

to say, whether it lays stress on precise theological definitions; whether it claims to possess sacred books or a revelation; whether it contains the idea of faith as a cardinal virtue. Further, it is always interesting to consider whether it has engendered a cosmogony, a theory of the cosmos, its origin, maintenance, and possible dissolution; and whether it is instinctively favourable or antagonistic to the growth of the scientific spirit, to the free activity of the intellect; and, finally, whether it gives prominence to the belief in the immortality of the soul and to the doctrine of posthumous rewards and punishments.

There are also certain special questions concerning the nature and powers of the divinity that are found to be of importance. The distinction of sex in the anthropomorphic religions, the paramountcy of the god or the goddess, is observed to produce a singular effect in religious psychology, and may be associated with fundamental differences in social institutions, with the distinction, for instance, between a patrilinear and a matrilinear society. As regards the powers attributed to the divinity, we may endeavour to discern certain laws of progress or evolution in progressive societies—an evolution, perhaps, from a more material to a more spiritual conception, or, again, from a belief in divinities finite and mortal to a dogma that infinity, omniscience, and immortality are their necessary attributes. On this line of inquiry we are often confronted with the phenomenon of the death of the god or goddess, and no single fact in the history of religions is of more interest and of more weight. Also, we frequently find an antagonism between malevolent and benevolent powers, whence may arise a philosophic conception of dualism in Nature and the moral world.

There are, further, the questions concerning ritual, often very minute, but of none the less significance. What are the forms of worship, sacrifice, prayer, adoration? As regards sacrifice, is it deprecatory merely, a bribe to avert wrath, or is it a gift to secure favour, or is it a token of friendly trust and affection, or a mystic act of communion which effects between the deity and the worshipper a temporary union of body and soul? In the study of ritual we may consider the position of the priesthood, its power over the religion, and through the religion over the State, and the sources of that power.

This enumeration of the problems is long, but I fear by no means exhaustive. I have not yet mentioned the question that may legitimately arise, and is the most perplexing of all—that which is asked concerning the vital power and influence of a certain religion, its strength of appeal, its real control of the people's thoughts and acts. The question, as we know, is difficult enough when we apply it to modern societies; it may be quite hopeless when applied to an ancient State. It is only worth raising when the record is unusually ample and varied, and of long continuity; when we can believe that it enshrines the thoughts of the people, not merely of the priest or of the philosopher. We are more likely to believe this when the record is rich not only in literature, but in monuments.

It may also be demanded that the history of religions should include a history of their decay, and, in his brilliant address at the recent Congress, Professor Petrie has formulated this demand as one that Egyptology might fulfil. Certainly it belongs to the scientific treatment of our subject to note the circumstances and operative causes that induced a certain people to abandon their ancestral beliefs and cults; but whether from the

careful study of each special case certain general laws will emerge by process of induction may be doubted. It will depend partly on the completeness of our records and our skill in their interpretation.

I will conclude this sketch of an ideal programme, which I, as least, can never hope to make actual, with one last query—Is it the main object of this comparative study to answer the inquiry as to the reciprocal influences of adjacent religions, to distinguish between the alien and the native elements in any particular system—to estimate, for instance, what Greece owed to Babylon, to Egypt, to India ? Certainly the problem is proper to our province, is attractive, and even hopeful, and I have ventured to approach it myself. But I should hesitate to allow that it is the main one, and that the value of our study is to be measured by our success in solving it ; for, whatever answer we finally give to such questions, or if we abandon in despair the attempt to answer them precisely, it is none the less fruitful to compare the Babylonian, Indo-Iranian, Egyptian, and Hellenic systems of belief—for instance, to consider the Orphic eschatology in relation to the Buddhistic, even if we reject the theory that Buddhistic influences could have penetrated into early Orphism.

I will now sketch what I have perceived to be the higher elements or more developed features in Hellenic religion, and will consider in regard to each of these how it contrasts with or resembles the cults of the other leading peoples of this area. The Hellenic high divinity is, in the first place, no mere shadowy " numen," no vague spirit-power or semi-personal divine force, such as the old Roman belief often seems to present us with, nor is he usually conceived as a divine element immanent in certain things ; but he appears as a concrete personal

individual of definite physical traits and complex moral nature. Vaguer and cruder ideas no doubt survived right through the historic period, and the primitive ancestor of the Hellene may once have lived in the religious phase of thought in which the personal god has not yet emerged or not yet been detached from the phenomenon or the world of living matter. But I believe that the Greek of the historic, and even of the Homeric, period had left this phase far more remotely behind him than certain modern theorists have lightly supposed, and I am convinced that the proto-Hellenic tribes had already before the conquest of Greece developed the cult of certain personal deities, and that some, at least, of these were the common heritage of several tribes. It is quite possible that before they crossed the northern frontier of Greece they found such divinities among their Aryan kinsfolk of Thrace, and it is certain that this was the type of religion that they would mainly find among the peoples of the Minoan-Mycenaean culture.

We discern it also, where the record allows us to discern anything, among the nearer and remoter stocks of the Asiatic side of the Mediterranean area. In the Zend-Avesta, the sacred books of the Persian religion, Ahura-Mazda is presented as a noble ethical figure, a concrete personal god, like Jahwé of Israel, whatever his original physical significance may have been. Marduk of Babylon, whom Hammurabi, the consolidator of the Babylonian power, raised to the rank of the high god, may once have been a sun-god, but he transcended his elemental nature, and appears in the records of the third millennium as a political deity, the war-god, and leader of the people, as real a personality as Hammurabi himself. The same is true of Asshur, once the local

deity of the aboriginal land of the Assyrians, but later raised by the imperial expansion of this people almost to the position of a universal god, the guardian of the land, the teacher and the father of the kings; nor can we discern that he was ever an elemental god.

Speaking generally, in spite of many important differences, we may regard the religious structure to which the cults of Anatolia and Egypt belonged as morphologically the same as that which I am defining as Hellenic. Also, among all these peoples, by the side of the few higher deities who have developed moral personalities, we find special elemental divinities, as, in Hellas, we find Helios and the deities of the wind, Hephaistos the fire-god.

The distinction between the religions of the Hellenes and "the barbarians," which Aristophanes defines as the difference between the worship of ideal divine personages, such as Zeus, Apollo, and Demeter, and the direct worship of elementary powers, such as sun and moon, is not borne out by modern research. Where we find sun-worship or moon-worship in the East, it does not appear to have been directed immediately to the thing itself regarded as a living or animate body, but to a personal god of the sun or the moon—Bel, Shamash, or Sin. We can only distinguish the Greek from the Oriental in respect of Nature-religion by the lesser degree of devotion that the Hellene showed to it. Only those of his divinities whose names connoted nothing in the material or natural world, could develop into free moral personalities, and dominate the religious imagination of the people. Nowhere, for instance, had Helios any high position in the Greek world except at Rhodes, where we must reckon with pre-Hellenic, Minoan, and later with Semitic influences. Therefore, when, shortly

before and after the beginning of the Graeco-Roman period, a wave of sun-worship welled from the East over the West, it may have brought with it religious ideas of high spirituality and ethical purity, yet by the race-consciousness of the Hellenes it must have been judged to be a regress towards a barbaric past.

The instinct of the Greek in his creation of divine forms shows always a bias towards the personal and the individual, an aversion to the amorphous and vague, and herein we may contrast him with the Persian and Egyptian. A certain minor phenomenon in these religions will illustrate and attest this. All of them admitted by the side of the high personal deities certain subordinate personages less sharply conceived, divine emanations, as we may sometimes call them, or personifications of moral or abstract ideas. Plutarch specially mentions the Persian worship of Truth, Good-will, Law-abidingness, Wisdom, emanations of Ahura-Mazda, which in the light of the sacred books we may, perhaps, interpret as the Fravashis or Soul-powers of the High God; and in certain Egyptian myths and religious records we hear of a personification of Truth, whose statue is described by the same writer. But at least in the Persian system we may suspect that such divine beings had little concrete personality, but, rather, were conceived vaguely as daimoniac forces, special activities of divine force in the invisible world. Now the Greek of the period when we really know him seems to have been mentally unable to allow his consciousness of these things or these forces to remain just at that point. Once, no doubt, it was after this fashion that his ancestors dimly imagined Eros, or the half-personal Curse-power Ἀρά; but he himself could only cherish Eros under the finished and concrete form of a

beautiful personal god, and the curse was only vitalised for him when it took on the form of the personal Erinys. This topic is a fruitful one, and I hope to develop it on a later occasion.

It suggests what is now the next matter I wish to touch on—the comparison of the Mediterranean religions in respect of their anthropomorphism. Philosophically, the term might be censured as failing to distinguish any special type of religion; for we should all admit that man can only envisage the unseen world in forms intelligible to his own mind and reflecting his own mental structure. But, apart from this truism, we find that religions differ essentially and vitally according as this anthropomorphism is vague and indefinite or sharply defined and dominating; according as they picture the divinity as the exact though idealised counterpart of man, and construct the divine society purely on the lines of the human, or refrain from doing this either through weakness and obscurity of imagination or in deference to a different and perhaps more elevated law of the religious intellect. Now, of the Hellenic religion no feature is salient as its anthropomorphism, and throughout its whole development and career the anthropomorphic principle has been more dominating and imperious than it has ever been found to be in other religions.[1] At what remote period in the evolution of the Hellenic mind this principle began in force, what were the influences that fostered and strengthened it, in what various ways it shaped the religious history of the Hellenic people, are questions that I may be able to treat more in detail in the future.

[1] I am aware that there are exceptions to this principle, which I propose to consider in a future course; no single formula can ever sum up all the phenomena of a complex religion.

But there are two important phenomena that I will indicate now, which we must associate with it, and which afford us an illuminating point of view from which we may contrast the Greek world and the Oriental. In the first place, the anthropomorphic principle, combining with an artistic faculty the highest that the world has known, produced in Greece a unique form of idolatry ; and, in the second place, in consequence chiefly of this idolatry, the purely Hellenic religion remained almost incapable of that which we call mysticism.

Now, much remains still to be thought out, especially for those interested in Mediterranean culture, concerning the influence of idolatry on religion ; and not only the history, but the psychology of religion, must note and estimate the influence of religious art. It may well be that the primitive Greeks, like the primitive Roman, the early Teuton, and Indo-Iranian stocks, were non-idolatrous, and this appears to have been true to some extent of the Minoan culture. Nevertheless, the Mediterranean area has from time immemorial been the centre of the fabric and the worship of the eikon and the idol. The impulse may have come from the East or from Egypt to the Hellene ; he in his turn imparted it to the Indian Aryans, as we now know, and in great measure at least to the Roman, just as the Assyrian-Babylonian temple-worship imparted it to the Persian. Nowhere, we may well believe, has the influence of idolatry been so strong upon the religious temperament as it was upon that of the Hellenes ; for to it they owed works of the type that may be called the human-divine, which surpass any other art-achievement of man.

I can here only indicate briefly its main effects. It

intensified the perception of the real personal god as a material fact. It increased polytheism by multiplying the separate figures of worship, often, perhaps, without intention. It assisted the imagination to discard what was uncouth and terrifying in the Hellenic religion, and was at once the effect and the cause of the attachment of the Hellenic mind towards mild and gracious types of godhead. The aniconic emblem and uncouth fetich-formed figures were here and there retained, because of vague ideas about luck or for superstitious fetichistic reasons; but the beautiful idol was cherished because it could arouse the enthusiastic affection of a sensitive people, and could bring them to the very presence of a friendly divine person. The saying that the Olympian deities died of their own loveliness means a wrong interpretation of the facts and the people. But for a beautiful idolatry, Hellenic polytheism would have passed away some centuries before it did, the deities fading into alien types or becoming fused one with the other. Nor was its force and influence exhausted by the introduction of Christianity, for it shaped the destinies of the Greek Church, and threw down a victorious challenge to the iconoclastic Emperors.

If now we were to look across the Mediterranean, and could survey the religious monuments of Persia, Assyria and Babylonia, Phoenicia, and the Hittite people, we should find a general acceptance of the anthropomorphic idea. The high personal deities are represented mainly in human form, but the art is not able to interpret the polytheistic beliefs with skilfully differentiated types. In Chaldaic and Assyrian art one type of countenance is used for various divinities, and this such as might inspire awe rather than affection. And the anthropomorphism is unstable. Often animal traits

appear in parts of the divine figure. Nergal has a lion's head; even the warrior Marduk is invoked in the mystic incantations as "Black Bull of the Deep, Lion of the dark house."[1] In fact, over a large part of anterior Asia, anthropomorphism and theriomorphism exist side by side in religious concept and religious art. We may say the same of Egypt, but here theriomorphism is the dominating factor.

As regards the explanation of this phenomenon, many questions are involved which are outside my present province. I would only express my growing conviction that these two distinct modes of representing the divine personage to the worshipper are not necessarily prior and posterior, the one to the other, in the evolution of religion. They can easily, and frequently do, coexist. The vaguely conceived deity shifts his shape, and the same people may imagine him mainly as a glorified man of human volition and action, and yet think of him as temporarily incarnate in an animal, and embody his type for purposes of worship or religious art in animal forms.

I would further indicate here what I cannot prove in detail—that theriomorphism lends itself to mysticism, while the anthropomorphic idolatry of Greece was strongly in opposition to it. The mystic theosophy that pervaded later paganism, and from which early Christianity could not escape, originated, as Reitzenstein has well shown, mainly in Egypt, and it arose partly, I think, in connection with the hieratic and allegorical interpretation of the theriomorphic idol. There was nothing mystic about the Zeus of Pheidias, so far as the form of the god was concerned. The forms were

[1] *Vide* Langdon, in *Transactions of Congress of the History of Religions*, 1908, vol. i. p. 251.

entirely adequate to the expression of the physical, moral, and spiritual nature of the god. The god was just that, and there was nothing behind, and, as the ancient enthusiast avers, "having once seen him thus, you could not imagine him otherwise." But when a divinity to whom high religious conceptions have already come to attach is presented, as it might be in Egyptian religious art, with the head of a jackal or an ape, the feeling is certain to arise sooner or later in the mind of the worshipper that the sense-form is inadequate to the idea. Then his troubled questioning will receive a mystic answer, and the animal type of godhead will be given an esoteric interpretation.

Plutarch, in the *De Iside et Osiride*,[1] is one of our witnesses. He finds a profounder significance for theosophy in the beetle, the asp, and the weasel than in the most beautiful anthropomorphic work of bronze or marble. He here turns his back on his ancestors, and goes over to the sect of the Egyptian mystic.

But the most curious testimony to my thesis is borne by an inscription on an Egyptian lamp—an invocation of the God Thoth: "O Father of Light, O Word (λόγος) that orderest day and night, come show thyself to me. O God of Gods, in thy ape-form enter."[2] Here the association of so mystic a concept as the "Logos," the divine Reason, an emanation of God with the form of an ape, is striking enough, and suggests to us many reflections on the contrast between the Egyptian theriomorphism and the human idolatry of the Greek. The Hermes of Praxiteles was too stubborn a fact before the people's eyes to fade or to soar into

[1] P. 382, C.

[2] *Vide* Petrie, in *Transactions of Congress of the History of Religions*, 1908, vol. i. p. 192.

the high vagueness of the "Logos," too stable in his beautiful humanity to sink into the ape.

But before leaving this subject I would point out a phenomenon in the Hellenic world that shows the working of the same principle. The Orphic god Dionysos-Sabazios-Zagreus was πολύμορφος, a shape-shifter, conceived now as bull, now as serpent, now as man, and the Orphic sects were penetrated with a mystic theosophy; and, again, they were a foreign element embedded in Greek society and religion.

While we were dealing with the subject of anthropomorphism, we should consider also the question of sex, for a religion that gives predominance to the god is certain to differ in some essential respects from one in which a goddess is supreme. Now, although the conception of an All-Father was a recognised belief in every Greek community, and theoretically Zeus was admitted to be the highest god, yet we may believe Athena counted more than he for the Athenians, and Hera more for the Argives. And we have evidence of the passionate devotion of many urban and village communities to the mother Demeter and her daughter Kore, to whom the greatest mysteries of Greece, full of the promise of posthumous salvation, were consecrated. Also, in the adjacent lands of earlier culture we mark the same phenomenon. In Egyptian religion we have the commanding figure of Isis, who, though by no means supreme in the earlier period, seems to dominate the latter age of this polytheism. In the Assyrian-Babylonian Pantheon, though the male deity is at the head, Ishtar appears as his compeer, or as inferior only to Asshur. Coming westward towards Asia Minor, we seem to see the goddess overshadowing the god. On the great Hittite monument at Boghaz-

Keui, in Cappadocia, skilfully interpreted by Dr. Frazer, we observe a great goddess with her son coequal with the Father-God. In the lands adjacent to the coast a Mother-Goddess, sometimes also imagined as virgin, Kybele of Phrygia, Ma of Cappadocia, Hipta of Lydia, Astarte of Askalon, Artemis of Ephesos who was probably a blend of Hellenic and Oriental cult-ideas, appears to have been dominant from an immemorial antiquity; and Sir Arthur Evans has discovered the same mysterious feminine power pre-eminent in the Minoan religion. We may even affirm that she has ruled a great part of the Mediterranean down to the present day.

The various questions suggested by this predominance of goddess-worship are fascinating and subtle. The sociological one—how far it is to be connected with a system of counting descent through the female, with a matrilinear society—I have partly discussed elsewhere.[1] I may later be able to enter on the question that is of more interest for the psychology of religion—the effect of such worships on the religious sentiment. Here I can merely point to the phenomenon as a natural and logical product of the principle of anthropomorphism, but would call attention to the fact that in the East it sometimes developed into a form that, from the anthropomorphic point of view, must be called morbid and subversive of this principle; for the rivalry of divine sex was here and there solved by the fusion of the two natures in the divinity, and we find a bisexual type—a male Astarte, a bearded Ishtar.[2] The healthy-minded anthropomorphism of the Hellene rejects this Oriental extravagance.

[1] *Archiv fur Religionswissenschaft*, 1904.
[2] *Vide* Jastrow, *Religion Babyloniens u. Assyriens*, vol. i. p. 545.

If we now could consider in detail the various moral conceptions attached to the high State divinities of Greece and the East, we should be struck with a general similarity in the point of view of the various culture-stocks. The higher deities, on the whole, are ethical beings who favour the righteous and punish transgressors; and the worship of Greece falls here into line with the Hebraic conceptions of a god of righteousness. But in one important particular Hellenic thought markedly differs from Oriental, especially the Persian. In the people's religion throughout Hellas the deities are, on the whole, worshipped as beneficent, as doing good to their worshippers, so long as these do not offend or sin against them. The apparent exceptions are no real exceptions. Ares may have been regarded as an evil god by the poet or the philosopher, but we cannot discover that this was ever the view of the people who cared to establish his cult. The Erinyes are vindictive; nevertheless, they are moral, and the struggle between them and Apollo in the Aeschylean drama is only the contest between a more barbaric and a more civilised morality. In the list of Greek divine titles and appellatives, only one or two at most can be given a significance of evil.

Doubtless, beneath the bright anthropomorphic religion lurked a fear of ghosts and evil spirits, and the later days of Hellenic paganism were somewhat clouded with demonology. But the average Greek protected himself sufficiently by purification and easy conventional magic. He did not brood on the principle of evil or personify it as a great cosmic power, and therefore he would not naturally evolve a system of religious dualism, though the germs from which this might grow may be found in Orphic tradition and doctrine. Contrast this with the evidence from Egypt, Assyria, and

Persia. The Egyptian and Assyrian records bear strong impress of the prominence and power of the belief in evil spirits. The high gods of Assyria were continually being invoked and implored by the worshipper to save him from the demons, and one of these, Ira, a demon of pestilence, seems to have received actual worship; and much of Egyptian private ritual was protective magic against them.

But nowhere did the power of evil assume such grand proportions as in the old Mazdean creed of Persia, and the dualism between the good and evil principle became here the foundation of a great religion that spread its influence wide through the West. The religion had its prophet, Zarathustra, in whose historic reality we ought not to doubt. In his system the faithful Mazdean is called upon to play his part in the struggle between Ahura-Mazda and Angra-Mainyu, and this struggle continues through the ages till in the final cataclysm the Daevas, or evil demons, will be overthrown. We note here that this faith includes the idea of a final Judgment, so familiar to Judaic and Christian thought, but scarcely to be found in the native Hellenic religion. Further, it should be observed that the Mazdean dualism between good and evil has nothing in common with the Platonic antithesis between mind and sense, or St. Paul's between spirit and flesh, or with the hatred of the body that is expressed in Buddhism. The good Mazdean might regard his body as good and pure, and therefore he escaped, as by a different way did the Greek, from the tyranny of a morbid ascetism. Only he developed the doctrine of purity into a code more burdensome than can be found, I think, elsewhere. The ideas of ritual-purity on which he framed this code are found broadcast through the East and in Egypt, and appear

in the Hellenic religion also. The Greek, however, did not allow himself to be oppressed by his own cathartic system, but turned it to excellent service in the domain of law, as I have tried to show elsewhere.[1]

Generally, as regards the association of religion and morality, we find this to be always intimate in the more developed races, but our statistics are insufficient for us to determine with certainty the comparative strength of the religious sanction of morals in the ancient societies of the Mediterranean. The ethical-religious force of the Zarathustrian faith seems to approach that of the Hebraic. We should judge it to be stronger, at least, than any that was exercised in Hellas, for Hellas, outside the Orphic sects, had neither sacred books of universal recognition nor a prophet. Yet all Hellenic morality was protected by religion, and the Delphic oracle, which occasionally was able to play the part of the father-confessor, encouraged a high standard of conduct—as high as the average found elsewhere in the ancient world. We may note, however, one lacuna in the Hellenic code: neither Greek ethics, on the whole, nor Greek religion, emphasised or exalted or deified the virtue of truth; but we hear of a goddess of Truth in Egypt, and it becomes a cardinal tenet and a divine force in the Zarathustrian ideal.

Again, in all ancient societies religion is closely interwoven with political, legal, and social institutions, and its influence on these concerns the history of the evolution of society and law. It is only in modern society, or in a few most ideal creeds at periods of great exaltation, that a severance is made between Cæsar and God. Save Buddhism, the religions of the ancient societies of the East and of Egypt were all in a sense political. Darius

[1] *Vide* my *Evolution of Religion*, pp. 139–152.

regards himself as specially protected by Ahura-Mazda, and we are told by Herodotus [1] that in the private Persian's prayers no separate personal benefits were besought, but only the welfare of the King and the Persian community. The gods of Assyria inspire counsel and order the campaign; Shamash, the sun-god, is "Just Ruler" and the "Lord of Law"; and Ninib is styled the god "who lays for ever the foundation-stone of the State," and who, like Zeus ὅριος, and the Latin Terminus, "protects the boundaries of the cornfield." The Syrian goddess of Bambyke, Kybele of Phrygia, Astarte of Askalon, all wear the mural crown, the badge of the city goddess. But I doubt if our materials are as yet rich enough to inform us in what precise way religion played a constructive part in the oldest civilisations,—namely, those of Assyria and Egypt. We may observe that the code of Hammurabi, our oldest legal document, is curiously secular and in many respects modern.

The question can be most fruitfully pursued in the study of the Greek societies; for no other religion of which we have any record was so political as the Hellenic, not even, as I should judge, the Roman, to which it bears the closest resemblance in this respect. The very origin of the πόλις, the city-state, was often religious; for the name or title of the deity often gave a name to the city, and the temple was in this case probably the centre of the earliest residence. In the organised and complex Greek societies, every institution of the State—the assembly, the council, the law-courts, the agrarian economy, all the regulations of the family and clan—were consecrated and safeguarded by the supervision of some deity. Often he or she was worshipped as in a literal sense the

[1] I. 132.

State ancestor, and in one of the temples might be found burning the perpetual fire which symbolised the permanence of the city's life. And in Greece we find a unique phenomenon, which, though small, is of great significance—the deity might here and there be made to take the office and title of a civic magistrate. For instance, Apollo was στεφανηφόρος in Asia Minor cities, and in the later days of Sparta, as the recent excavations have shown, the ghost of Lykourgos was elected as the chief inspector of the education of the young.

To the superficial observer, then, the Greek civic society might appear a theocracy. But such a view would imply ignorance of the average character of the ancient Greek world. There can be no theocracy where there is no theocrat. In Asia Minor the priest might be a great political power, but in Greece this was never so. Here the political, secular, utilitarian interest dominates the religion. The high divinities become politicians, and immersed in secular affairs, and even take sides in the party strife, as some of the religious titles attest. Thus Greek religion escaped morbidity and insanity, becoming genial and human, and compensating by its adaptability to the common needs of social life for what it lacked of mystery and aloofness. Therefore, also, in Greek invocations and hymns we do not often hear the echo of that sublimity that resounds in the Iranian, Assyrian, and still more in the Hebrew liturgies.

Another interesting point of comparison is the relation of religion to the arts and sciences. Their association may be said to have been more intimate in Hellenism than it has been found to be in any other creed. We can estimate what music and the drama owed to Apollo and Dionysos, and how the life of the

philosopher, artist, and poet was considered consecrated to certain divinities. We hear of the Delphic oracle encouraging philosophic pursuits. The name "Museum" is a landmark in the religious history of education, and we know that the temple of Asklepios in Kos was the cradle of the school of modern medicine. The records of the other religions of this area show glimpses of the same association, and more extended research may throw further light on it. The Babylonian gods Nebo and Ea were divinities of wisdom and the arts, and to the former, who was the inventor of writing, the library of Ashurbanapal was consecrated. Chaldean astronomy was evolved from their astrology, which was itself a religious system. But demonology was stronger in Assyria, Persia, and Egypt than in Hellas, and demonology is the foe of science. In the Zend-Avesta the priestly medicine-man, who heals by spell and exorcism, is ranked higher than the scientific practitioner. A chapter might be written on the negative advantages of Greek religion, and none was of greater moment than this—that it had no sacred books or authoritative religious cosmogony to oppose to the dawn and the development of scientific inquiry. Asklepios had been a practitioner in the method of thaumaturgic cures, but he accepted Hippokrates genially when the time came.

As regards the relation between Greek philosophy and Greek religion, something may remain to be discovered by any scholar who is equally familiar with both. It would be absurd to attempt to summarise the facts in a few phrases here. I wish merely to indicate the absence in pure Hellenic speculation of any elaborated system of theosophy, such as the late Egyptian "gnosis," till we come to Neo-Platonism, when the Greek intellect is no longer pure. We discover

also a vacuum in the religious mind and nomenclature of the earlier Greek: he had neither the concept nor any name to express the concept of what we call "faith," the intellectual acceptance and confessional affirmation of certain dogmas concerning the divinity; and in this respect he differed essentially not only from the Christian, but also from the Iranian and Buddhistic votary.

A great part of the study of ancient religion is a study of ritual, and it is interesting to survey the Mediterranean area, so as to discern similarities or divergencies in the forms of religious service. Everywhere we observe the blood-sacrifice of animals, and very frequently the harmless offering of fruits and cereals, and now one, now the other, in Greece as elsewhere, was regarded as the more pious. The former is of the higher interest, for certain ideas which have been constructive of higher religions—our own, for example—have grown out of it. At first sight the animal oblation seems everywhere much the same in character and significance. The sacrificial ritual of Leviticus does not differ in any essential trait from that which commended itself to the Greeks and the other peoples of these lands. Certain animals are everywhere offered, at times as a free and cheerful gift, at other times as an atonement to expiate sin and to deprecate wrath. Certain other animals are tabooed, for reasons that may repay searching out.

In most regions we have evidence of the practice of human sacrifice, either as an established system or as an occasional expedient. The motives that prompted it present an important and intricate question to the modern inquirer. The two nations that grew to abhor it and to protest against it were the Hebrew and the Greek, though the latter did not wholly escape the taint

of it; for he had inherited the practice from his ancestral past, and he found it indigenous in the lands he conquered. Repellent as the rite may be, it much concerns the study of the religions of the cultured races.

Now, an interesting theory concerning sacrifice was expounded and brought into prominent discussion by Professor Robertson Smith in his *Religion of the Semites*, and in an earlier article in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* —namely, that a certain type of ancient sacrifice was a mystic sacramental communion, the worshipper partaking of some sacred food or drink in which the spirit of the deity was temporarily lodged. This mystic act, of which there is no clear trace in the Old Testament, is reported from Egypt,[1] and it appears to have been part of the Attis ritual of Phrygia. We find doubtful traces of it in the Eleusinian and Samothracian mysteries; also a glimpse of it here and there in the public religion of Hellas. But it is best attested as a potent force in the Dionysiac worship, especially in a certain savage ritual that we may call Thracian, but also in the refined and Hellenised service as well.

I cannot dwell here on the various aspects of this problem. The Hellenic statistics and their significance I have partly collected and estimated in a paper published some years ago.[2] The application of the sacramental idea to the explanation of the Eleusinian mysteries, ingeniously attempted by Dr. Jevons, I have discussed in the third volume of my *Cults of the Greek States*; and the Dionysiac communion-service is considered at length in the fifth.

The attractiveness of the mystic appeal of the

[1] *Transactions of Congress of History of Religions*, 1908, vol. i. p. 192.

[2] *Hibbert Journal*, 1904, "Sacrificial Communion in Greek Religion."

Sacrament appears to have increased in the later days of paganism, especially in its period of struggle with Christianity. That strangest rite of the expiring polytheism, the ταυροβόλιον, or the baptism in bull's blood, in the worship of Kybele, has been successfully traced back by M. Cumont to the worship of the Babylonian Anaitis. The sacramental concept was the stronghold of Mithraism, but can hardly be regarded as part of its heritage from Persia, for it does not seem to have been familiar to the Iranian religion nor to the Vedic Indian. In fact, the religious history of no other Aryan race discloses it with clearness, save that of the Thraco-Phrygian and Hellenic. Was it, then, a special product of ancient "Mediterranean" religious thought? It would be important to know, and Crete may one day be able to tell us, whether King Minos took the sacrament. Meantime, I would urge upon those who are studying this phenomenon in the various religions the necessity of precise definition, so as to distinguish the different grades of the sacramental concept, for loose statements are somewhat rife about it.

Apart from the ritual of the altar, there is another mode of attaining mystic union with the divinity—namely, by means of a sacred marriage or simulated corporeal union. This is suggested by the initiation formulæ of the mysteries of Attis-Kybele. The cult of Kybele was connected with that of the Minoan goddess, and the strange legend of Pasiphae and the bull-god lends itself naturally to this interpretation. The Hellenic religion also presents us with a few examples of the holy marriage of the human bride with the god, the most notable being the annual ceremony of the union of the "Queen," the wife of the King Archon, at Athens, with Dionysos. And in the mysteries of

later paganism, as well as in certain forms and symbolism of early Christianity, Professor Dieterich has traced the surviving influence of this rite.

Among all the phenomena of ritual, none are more interesting or in their effects more momentous than the rites that are associated with the dogma of the death of the divinity. That the high gods are naturally mortal and liable to death is an idea that is certainly rare, though it may be found in Egyptian and old Teutonic mythology; but the dogma of the annual or periodic death and resurrection of the divinity has been, and is, enacted in much peasant ritual, and worked for the purposes of agrarian magic in Europe and elsewhere. More rarely we find the belief attached to the mystic forms and faith of some advanced religion, and it is specially in the Mediterranean area where it appears in a high stage of development. It is a salient feature of the Egyptian worship of Isis; of the Sumerian-Babylonian ritual, in which the dead Thammuz was bewailed, and which penetrated Syria and other parts of Asia Minor; of the worship of Attis and Adonis in Phrygia and the Lebanon; and of certain shrines of the Oriental Aphrodite. It is associated often with orgiastic sorrow and ecstatic joy, and with the belief in human immortality of which the resurrection of the deity is the symbol and the efficacious means. This idea and this ritual appears to have been alien to the native Hellenic religion. The Hellenic gods and goddesses do not die and rise again.

Only in one Aryan nation of antiquity, so far as I am aware, was the idea clear and operative—the Thraco-Phrygian, in the religion of Dionysos-Sabazios. This alien cult, when transplanted into Greece, retained still some savagery in the rite that enacted the death of the

god; but in the Orphic sects the ritual idea was developed into a doctrine of posthumous salvation, from which the later pre-Christian world drew spiritual comfort and some fertile moral conceptions. This Thracian-Dionysiac influence in Hellas, though chastened and sobered by the sanity of the national temperament, initiated the Hellene into a certain spiritual mood that was not naturally evoked by the native religion; for it brought into his polytheism a higher measure of enthusiasm, a more ecstatic spirit of self-abandonment, than it possessed by its own traditional bent. Many civilised religions appear to have passed beyond the phase of orgiastic fervour. It emerges in the old Egyptian ritual, and most powerfully in the religion of Phrygia and of certain districts of Syria; but it seems to have been alien to the higher Semitic and the Iranian religions, as it was to the native Hellenic.

I have only been able here, without argument or detailed exposition, to present a short summary of the more striking phenomena in the religious systems of our spiritual ancestors. Many of the problems I have stated still invite further research, which may considerably modify our theories. I claim that the subject possesses a masterful interest both in its own right and for the light it sheds on ancient philosophy, ancient art, and ancient institutions. And it ought in the future to attract more and more the devotion of some of our post-graduate students. Much remains to be done even for the Hellenic and Roman religions, still more for those of Egypt and Assyria. Here, in our University of Oxford, under whose auspices the Sacred Books of the East were translated, and where the equipment for the study is at least equal to that of any other centre of learning, this appeal ought not to be made in vain.

CHAPTER II.

Statement of the Problem and the Evidence.

The subject I have chosen for this course may appear over-ambitious; and the attempt to pass critical judgment upon the facts that arise in this wide comparative survey may be thought premature. For not only is the area vast, but large tracts of it are still unexplored, while certain regions have yielded materials that are ample and promising, but of which the true interpretation has not yet been found. We have, for instance, abundant evidence flowing in with ever-increasing volume of the Sumerian-Babylonian religion, but only a portion of the cuneiform texts has as yet been authoritatively translated and made available for the service of Comparative Religion. The Hittite monuments are witnesses of primary value concerning Hittite religion: but the Hittite script may reveal much more that is vital to our view of it, and without the help of that script we are not sure of the exact interpretation of those religious monuments; but though we have recently heard certain encouraging expressions of hope, the master-word has not yet been found that can open the door to this buried treasure of knowledge. And again, the attempt to gauge accurately the relation and the indebtedness of Greek religion to that of the near East cannot be wholly successful, until we know more of the Minoan-Mycenaean religion;

and our hope hangs here partly on the discovery of more monuments, but mainly, I am convinced, on the decipherment of the mysterious Minoan writing, to which great achievement Sir Arthur Evans' recent work on the *Scripta Minoa* is a valuable contribution. Therefore the time is certainly not yet ripe for a final and authoritative pronouncement on the great questions that I am venturing upon in this course.

But even the early premature attempts to solve a problem may contribute something to the ultimate satisfying solution. And often in the middle of our investigations, when new evidence continues to pour in, there comes a moment when it is desirable to look around and take stock, so to speak, to consider whether we can draw some general conclusions with safety, or in what direction the facts appear at this stage to be pointing. In regard to the religions of anterior Asia and South-Eastern Europe, and the question of their relationships, this is now, I feel, a seasonable thing to do—all the more because the Asiatic region has been mainly explored by specialists, who have worked, as was profitable and right, each in his special province, without having the time or perhaps the training to achieve a comparative survey of the whole. We know also by long experience the peculiar dangers to which specialists are prone ; in their enthusiastic devotion to their own domain, they are apt to believe that it supplies them with the master-key whereby to unlock many other secret places of human history. This hope, soon to prove an illusion, was regnant when the interpretation of the Sacred Vedic Books was first accomplished. And now certain scholars, who are distinguished specialists in Assyriology, are putting forward a similar claim for Babylon, and are championing the view that the

Sumerian-Assyrian religion and culture played a dominating part in the evolution of the Mediterranean civilisation, and that therefore much of the religious beliefs and practices of the early Greeks and other European stocks must be traced back to Mesopotamia as their fountain-head.[1] This will be encouraging to that distinguished writer on Greek religion, Dr. O. Gruppe, who almost a generation ago proclaimed in his *Griechische Mythologie* the dogma of the emanation of all religion from a single centre, and the dependence of Greece upon the near East.

Now there ought to be no prejudice *a priori* against such a theory, which stands on a different footing from what I may call the Vedic fallacy: and it is childish to allow to the Aryan, or any other racial bias, any malignant influence in these difficult discussions. Those who have worked for years upon the marvellously rich records of Mesopotamian culture, whether at first hand or, like myself, at second hand, cannot fail to receive the deepest impression of its imperial grandeur and its forceful vitality, and of its intensity of thought and purpose in the sphere of religion. Naturally, they may feel, such spiritual power must have radiated influence far and wide over the adjacent lands; and no one could maintain that South-Eastern Europe was too remote to have been touched, perhaps penetrated, by it. For we know that, under certain conditions, the race-barrier falls down before the march of a conquering and dominating religion. And now, in the new light of a wider historical survey, instead of saying, as once was said, "What is more its own than a people's gods?" we

[1] *Vide* the critical remarks on such a view by Prof. Jastrow in *Transactions of the Third International Congress of the History of Religions*, vol. i. pp. 234–237.

may rather ask, "What is less its own than a people's gods?" always, however, remembering that race-tradition, inherited instinctive feeling and thought, is very strong in these matters, and that a people will, often unconsciously, cling to its ancestral modes of religious consciousness and expression, while it will freely borrow alien forms, names, and ritual.

The inquiry indicated by the title of these lectures is naturally twofold; it may be applied either to the earlier or the later periods of the Hellenic and Hellenic-Roman history. The question concerning the later period, though much critical research is needed for its clear solution, is far simpler and more hopeful: for the evidence is immeasurably fuller and more precise, and historical dates and landmarks are there to help. The history of the invasion of the West by Mithraism has been masterfully stated by Cumont; the general influence of the Anatolian religions upon Graeco-Roman society is presented and estimated by the same writer in his *Religious Orientales*; by Toutain, in his *Les Cultes Paiens dans l'Empire Romain*; by our own scholar, Samuel Dill, in *Roman Society in the last Century of the Western Empire*; and more summarily by Salomon Reinach in his *Orpheus*. Therefore I am not going to pursue the inquiry at this end, although I may have to notice and use some of the later evidence. I am going to raise the question concerning the very origins of the Hellenic religious system, so as to test the recently proclaimed dogma of certain Assyriologists, and to determine, if possible, whether the Orient played any formative part in the organic development of Greek religion. For this is just the question which, I venture to maintain, has never yet been critically explored. From what I have said at the beginning, it is obvious that I cannot

promise final and proved results. It will be gain enough if we can dimly discern something behind the veil that shrouds the origins of things, can reach to something that has the air of a reasoned scientific hypothesis, and still more if we can indicate the paths along which one day light may come.

We may then begin at once with stating more clearly what are the necessary conditions for a successful solution of the problem. First, we must accomplish a thorough exploration of the religions of the Anatolian and Mesopotamian lands; secondly, we must explore the Minoan-Mycenaean religion, and estimate the strength of its influence on the later period; thirdly, we must be able to decide what beliefs and practices the Hellenes brought with them from the North; lastly, before we can hope for any precision in our results, we must be able to answer with some degree of accuracy a burning chronological question: What was the date of the arrival through the Balkans from the North of those Aryan-speaking tribes that by mingling with the Southerners formed the Hellenic people of history? For only then shall we be able to test the whole question, by considering the position of the Eastern powers at this momentous epoch. The third of these inquiries, concerning the aboriginal religious ideas of the earliest Aryan Hellenes, is perhaps the most troublesome of all. I may venture upon it at a later occasion, but it is far too difficult and extensive to combine it with the others in a short treatise. Nor can I do more than touch lightly on the Minoan-Mycenaean period; for I wish to devote the greater part of these lectures to the comparative survey of Greece, Anatolia, and Mesopotamia, as this task has never yet been critically performed. Something like an attempt was made by

Tiele in his *Histoire des anciennes Religions*, but when that book was written much of the most important evidence had not yet come in.

But before beginning the exploration of any large area, whether for the purposes of Comparative Religion, archaeology, or anthropology, we must possess or acquire certain data of ethnography and secular history. We must, for instance, face the chronological question that I mentioned just above, before we can estimate the formative influences at work in the earliest phases of Hellenic development. Recent archaeological evidence, which I cannot here discuss, renders us valuable aid at this critical point of our inquiry. We can no longer relegate the earliest Hellenic invasion of Greece to a very remote period of Mediterranean history. The arguments from the Minoan culture, combined with the still more striking evidence, of which the value is not yet fully appreciated, obtained by the recent excavations of the British School on the soil of Thessaly,[1] point to the conviction that this, the epoch-making event of the world's secular and spiritual life, occurred not much earlier than 1500 B.C. On this hypothesis, our quest becomes less vague. We can consider what influences were likely to be radiating from the East upon the opposite shores of the Aegean during those few centuries, in which the Hellenic tribes were passing from barbarism to culture, and the religious beliefs and ritual were developing into that comparatively advanced and complex form of polytheism which is presented about 1000 B.C. in the Homeric poems. By this date we may assert that the Hellenic spirit had evolved certain definite traits and had acquired a certain autonomous power. While continuing always to be quickly responsive to

[1] Vide *Annual of the British School*, 1909, 1910.

alien influence, it would not henceforth admit the alien product with the submissive and infantine docility of barbarians In fact, when we compare the Homeric religion with that of the fifth century, we feel that in this particular sphere of the social and spiritual life the Hellene in many essentials had already come to his own in the Homeric period. Therefore, in trying to track the earliest streams of influences that moulded his religious consciousness, what was operative before the tenth century is of more primary importance than what was at work upon him afterwards.

Now the most recent researches into Mesopotamian history establish with certainty the conclusion that there was no direct political contact possible between the powers in the valley of the Euphrates and the western shores of the Aegean, in the second millennium B.C. It is true that the first Tiglath-Pileser, near the end of the twelfth century, extended the Assyrian arms to the shores of South-Eastern Asia, to Cilicia and Phoenicia [1]; but there does not seem to have been any permanent Assyrian or Babylonian settlement on this littoral. The city of Sinope in the north, which, as the legend attests and the name that must be derived from the Assyrian god Sin indicates, was originally an Assyrian colony, was probably of later foundation, and geographically too remote to count for the present inquiry. In fact, between the nascent Hellas and the great world of Mesopotamia, there were powerful and possibly independent strata of cultures interposing. We have to reckon first with the great Hittite Kingdom, which included Cappadocia and Northern Syria, and was in close touch with Phrygia and many of the communities

[1] *Vide* Zimmern, *Die Keilinschriften und das alte Testament* (K.A.T.)[3], pp. 37–38.

of the shore-line of Asia Minor; and which at the period of the Tel-el-Amarna correspondence was in diplomatic relations and on terms of equality with the Assyrian and Egyptian powers. And the tendency of modern students, such as Messerschmidt in his *Die Hettiter*, is to extend this ethnic name so as to include practically all the Anatolian peoples who were other than the Aryan and Semitic stocks. As far as I can discern, at the present stage of our knowledge this is unscientific; and it is at present safer to regard the pre-Aryan inhabitants of the Troad, Phrygia, Lycia, Caria, and Lydia, possibly Cilicia, as varieties of an ancient Mediterranean stock to which the people of the Minoan-Aegean culture themselves belonged. At any rate, for the purposes of our religious comparison, they are to be counted as a third stratum, through which as through the Hittite the stream of influence from Mesopotamia would be obliged to percolate before it could discharge itself upon the Hellenic world. And these interjacent peoples are races of great mental gifts and force; they were not likely to transmit the Mesopotamian influence pure and unmingled with currents of their own religious life.

Therefore this great problem of old-world religion is no light one; and fallacies here can only be avoided by the most critical intelligence trained on the best method of comparative religious study. We must endeavour to seize and comprehend the most essential and characteristic features of the Babylonian-Assyrian cults and theology; we must discover all that is at present possible, and trust to the future for discovering more, concerning the Hittite religion; and then we must glean all we can of the earliest forms of cult in vogue among the other peoples of the Asia-Minor coast,

and in the early world of the Minoan-Mycenaean culture.

And if the phenomena of this area present us with certain general resemblances to the Hellenic, we must not too hastily assume that the West has borrowed from the East. For often in comparing the most remote regions of the world we are struck with strange similarities of myth and cult; and, where the possibility of borrowing is ruled out, we must have recourse to the theory of spontaneous generation working in obedience to similar psychical forces. The hypothesis of borrowing, which is always legitimate where the peoples with whom we are concerned are adjacent, is only raised to proof either when the linguistic evidence is clear, for instance when the divine names or the names of cult-objects are the same in the various districts, or when the points of resemblance in ritual or religious concept are numerous, striking, and fundamental, or peculiar to the communities of a certain area. This is all the more necessary to insist on, because many superficial points of resemblance will be found in all religions that are at the same stage of development.

Now, in beginning this wide comparative survey, one's first difficulty is to arrange the material in such a way as to enable one to present a comparison that shall be definite and crucial. It would be useless to attempt a mere synoptical outline of the Babylonian-Sumerian religion; those whom that might content will find one in Dr. Pinches' handbook, *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, or Mr. King's *Babylonian Religion*, while those who desire a more thorough and detailed presentation of it will doubtless turn to the laborious and critical volumes of Prof. Jastrow, *Die Religion Babyloniens u. Assyriens*. But for me to

try to present this complex polytheism *en bloc* would be useless in view of my present object; for two elaborate religious systems cannot effectively be compared *en bloc*. A more hopeful method for those who have to pass cursorily over a great area, is to select certain salient and essential features separately, and to see how, in regard to each one, the adjacent religious systems agree or differ. And the method I propose to pursue throughout this course is as follows: Ignoring the embryology of the subject, that is to say, all discussions about the genesis of religious forms and ideas that would contribute nothing to our purpose, I will try to define the morphology of the Mesopotamian and Anatolian religions; and will first compare them with the Hellenic in respect of the element of personality in the divine perception, the tendency to, or away from, anthropomorphism, the relation of the deities to the natural world, to the State, and to morality, and I will consider what we can deduce from the study of the famous law-code of Hammurabi. A special question will arise concerning the supremacy of the goddess, a phenomenon which may be of some importance as a clue in our whole inquiry. The comparison will then be applied to the religious psychology of the different peoples; and here it will be useful to analyse and define that element of the religious temper which we call fanaticism, and which sometimes affords one of the crucial distinctions between one religion and another.

We may also obtain evidence from a comparison of the cosmogonic ideas prevalent over this area, so far as the records reveal any, as well as of the eschatological beliefs concerning man's future destiny and his posthumous existence. Finally, we must compare the various cult-objects and forms of ritual, the significance of the

sacrifice; the position and organisation of the priesthood; and here it will be convenient to consider the ritual of magic as well as of the higher service and the part played by magic within the limits of the higher religion. If under each of these heads we have been able to discover certain salient points of divergence or resemblance between the Hellene and the Mesopotamian, we may be able to draw a general deduction of some probability concerning the whole question. In any case we may be encouraged by the assurance that the comparison of two complex and highly developed religions is fruitful and interesting in itself, whether it yields us definite historical conclusions or not.

CHAPTER III.

The Morphology of the Compared Religions.

As I said in a previous lecture,[1] "we must regard the religious structure to which the cults of Anatolia and Mesopotamia belonged as morphologically the same as the Hellenic." The grounds of this judgment may be now briefly shown. In his *Historie des anciennes Religions*, Tiele classifies most of these together under the category of Nature-Religions, which he distinguishes from the ethical: he is thinking of the distinction between that religious view in which the divinity is closely associated, or even identified, with some natural object, and that in which the divinity is a moral being merely, stript of all attributes that are derived from the world of nature. Serious objection may be taken to the terms in which this classification of religions is expressed. The only religions which would fall under the ethical class would be the Judaic, the Moslem, and the Christian: and yet the Hebrews in the most exalted period of their religion prayed to their god for rain and crops, and the Christian Churches do the same to this day. A deity whose interest is purely ethical has only existed in certain philosophic systems: he has never had an established cult. On the other hand, a nature-religion, at the stage when personal deities have been somewhat developed, which is not also

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 9.

moral, has yet to be discovered. Religion, in its origin possibly non-moral, must, as society advances, acquire the closest relations with the social moral code. A Sun-god or Thunder-god—Shamash, for instance, of Babylon, Mithras of Persia, Sol Invictus of the later Roman Empire—may become a great divinity of an ethical cult and yet retain his association with the element. And it is fruitless to classify higher religions at least on such a basis of distinction as "moral" and "non-moral." [1]

It is more to the purpose of our present comparison to employ as one of our test-standards the degree of personality in the cult-objects of the different races. Is the popular imagination still on the level of animism which engenders mere vaguely conceived daimones, shadowy agents, working perhaps in amorphous groups, without fixed names or local habitations or special individuality? Or has it reached that stage of religious perception at which personal deities emerge, concrete individualities clothed with special attributes, physical, moral, spiritual? The most superficial study of the cuneiform texts and the religious monuments of the Sumerian-Babylonian society does not leave us in doubt how we should answer these questions in behalf of the peoples in the Mesopotamian valley. When the Semitic tribes first pushed their way into these regions, swarming probably, as usual, from Arabia, at some remotely early date, they found there the non-Semitic Sumerian people possessed of a highly complex religious pantheon. Bringing with them their own Shamash the sun-god, Adad the storm-god, and the

[1] Westermarck maintains the view in his *Origin and Development of Moral Ideas*, pp. 663–664, that in many savage religions the gods have no concern with ordinary morality; but the statistics he gives need careful testing.

great goddess Ishtar, and perhaps other divinities, they nevertheless took over the whole Sumerian pantheon, with its elaborate liturgy of hymns and incantations; and for the record of this great and fascinating hieratic literature the Sumerian language—with interlinear Babylonian-Assyrian paraphrase—was preserved down to the beginning of our era. This religious system of dateless antiquity suffered little change "from the drums and tramplings" of all the conquerors from the time of Sargon 1st and the kings before Hammurabi to the day of the Macedonian Seleukos. And in a sketch of this system as it prevailed in the second millennium B.C. it is quite useless for our purpose to try to distinguish between Sumerian and Semitic elements. It is more valuable to formulate this obvious fact, that a widespread belief in personal concrete divinities, upon which an advanced polytheism was based, was an immemorial phenomenon in this region. Tiele's hypothesis[1] that the earliest Sumerian system was not so much a polytheism as a polydaimonism, out of which certain definite gods gradually emerged some time before the Semitic period, is merely *a priori* theorising. The earliest texts and monuments reveal as vigorous a faith in real divine personalities as the latest: witness[2] that interesting relief recently found on a slab in the caravan route near Zohab, on which the goddess In-Hinni is bringing captives to the King Annubanini: the evidence of the text accompanying it points to a period earlier than that of King Hammurabi. We may compare with this the impressive relief which shows

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 170; as far as I know, only one fact might be cited in support of Tiele's view, a fact mentioned by Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 52, that the idiogram of Enlil, the god of Nippur, signifies Lord-Daimon (Lil = Daimon); but we might equally well interpret it "Lord of Winds."

[2] *Vide* Hüsing, *Der Zagros und seine Völker*, p. 16.

us the stately form of Hammurabi receiving his code of laws from the sun-god Shamash seated on his throne[1]; and of a later date, the alabaster relief from Khorsabad showing a sacrifice to Marduk, a speaking witness to the stern solemnity of the Babylonian worship and to the strength of the faith in personal divinity.[2] That this faith was as real in the polytheistic Babylonian as in the monotheistic Israelite is evinced not merely by the monuments, but still more clearly and impressively by the Sumerian hymns and liturgies.

Nevertheless the phenomena of animism coexist in all this region with those of developed theism. By the side of these high personal deities we find vague companies of divine powers such as the Igigi and the Anunnaki, who are conceived more or less as personal but without clearly imagined individuality, the former being perhaps definable as the daimones of heaven, the latter as the daimones of earth. Similarly, in the Hellenic system we note such nameless companies of divine agencies as the Ἐρινύες and Πραξιδίκαι, conceived independently of the concrete figures of the polytheism. But, further, in the Mesopotamian religion we must reckon seriously with lower products of polydaemonism than these, the demons of evil and disease who so dominated the imagination and much of the religious life of the private person that the chief object of the elaborate ritual was, as we shall see, to combat these. Only, as the curtain gradually rolls away from the remote past of this earliest home of human culture, it is not given us to see the gradual emergence of the divine personalities, or trace—as perhaps we may else-

[1] *Vide* Plate in Winckler, "Die Gesetze Hammurabi," in *Der Alte Orient*, 1906.

[2] Perrot et Chipiez, *Histoire de l'art, Assyrie*, p. 109, fig. 29 (Roscher, *Lexikon*, ii. p. 2358).

where—the process from polydaimonism to theism. The gods, as far as we can discern, were always there, and at least it is not in the second millennium B.C. that me may hope to find the origins of theistic religion.

As regards the other Semitic stocks, the cumulative evidence of early inscriptions, literary records, and legends is sufficient proof that the belief in high personal divinities was predominant in this millennium. It is not necessary to labour here at the details of the proof; the other lines of inquiry that I am soon going to follow will give sufficient illustration of this; and it is enough to allude to the wide prevalence of the designation of the high god as Baal or Bel, which can be traced from Assyria through Syria, in the Aramaean communities, in Canaan and Phoenicia, and in the Phoenician colonies: the Moabite Stone tells us of Chemosh; the earliest Carthaginian inscriptions of Baal-Hammon and Tanit; from our earliest witness for Arabian religion, Herodotus,[1] we learn that the Arabs named their two chief divinities, Orotal and Alilat, a god and a goddess, whom he identifies with Dionysos and Aphrodite Ourania.

It is still more important for us to know the stage reached by the Hittite religion in this early period; for in the latter half of the second millennium the influence of the Hittite culture had more chance of touching the earliest Greek societies than had that of the remote Mesopotamia or of the inaccessible Canaanites. In the last thirty years the explorers of Asia Minor, notably Sir William Ramsay and Dr. Hogarth, have done inestimable service to the comparative study of the Mediterranean area by the discovery and interpretation of the monuments of Hittite art: and the greatest of them all, the rock-cut reliefs of Boghaz-Keui in Cap-

[1] 3, 8.

padocia, has given material to Dr. Frazer for constructing an elaborate theory of Hittite sacrifice in his '*Attis, Adonis, Osiris.*' But, before dealing with the Hittite monuments, the student should note the literary evidence which is offered by the treaty inscribed on a silver tablet (*circ.* 1290 B.C.) found in Egypt, which was ratified between Ramses II. and the Hittite King Chattusar;[1] the witnesses to the treaty are the thousand gods and goddesses of the Hittite land and the thousand gods and goddesses of Egypt. We are certainly here not dealing with mere vague pluralities of spirits, such as may be found in an animistic system of Shamanism; the thousand is only a vague numeral for the plurality of divinities in the Hittite and Egyptian polytheism; the difference of sex would alone suffice to prove that the Hittite had developed the cult of personal deities, and the document expressly quotes the great heaven-god of the Hittites, called by the Egyptian name Sutekh, and regarded as compeer of the Egyptian Ra. Other personal Hittite deities are alluded to in the document, and among them appears to be mentioned a certain "Antheret of the land of Kheta."[2] Possibly a witness of still earlier date speaks in the Tel-Amarna letters, the earliest diplomatic correspondence in the world; one of these, written in cuneiform to Amenhotep III., in the fifteenth century B.C., is from Tushratta, the King of the Mitani people.[3] Tushratta sends his daughter in marriage to Pharaoh, and prays that "Shamash and Ishtar may go before her," and that Amon may "make her correspond to my brother's wish." He even dispatches a statue of Ishtar of Nineveh, that "she may

[1] Messerschmidt, *Die Hettiter*, p. 9; Stanley Cook, *Religion of Ancient Palestine*, p. 73.

[2] So Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 73, who interprets her as Astarte.

[3] Winckler, *Tel-El-Amarna Letters*, 17.

exercise her beneficent power in the land of Egypt"; for she had revealed her desire by an oracle—"to Egypt to the land that I love will I go."

The Mitani chieftains bear names that show a convincingly Aryan formation, and we know from the momentous inscriptions found in 1907 at Boghaz-Keui recording treaties between the king of the Hittites and the king of the Mitani (B.C. 1400), that the dynasts of the latter people had Aryan gods in their pantheon.[1] But the Mitani themselves were not Aryans, and are assumed by Winckler and Messerschmidt to be Hittites.[2] If this were proved, the theory which it is the general aim of these lectures to consider, that the Babylonian religious system may have reached the Mediterranean in the second millennium, would receive a certain *vraisemblance* from the fact revealed by the letter of King Tushratta, namely, that the Mitani of this period had adopted some of the Mesopotamian personal divinities, and might therefore have transmitted them to the coast of Asia Minor. Yet the Hittites had their own local divine names; from the cuneiform inscriptions written in the Hittite language found at Van in Armenia, we gather the names of various Hittite gods, Teshup, for instance, who appears on a column found at Babylon holding the lightning, and in his right hand a hammer, which, from the analogy of other religions, we may interpret as the fetich-emblem of the thunder.[3]

In fact, apart from the literary evidence, the Hittite

[1] *Vide* Winckler, *Mittheil des deutsch. Orientgesellsch.*, 1907, No. 35.

[2] Winckler, *Die Völker Vorderasiens*, p. 21; Messerschmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 5; Kennedy, *Journ. Royal Asiat. Soc.*, 1909, p. 1110, declares that their language has been proved to belong to the Ural-Altaic group and to be akin to Vannic.

[3] *Vide* Messerschmidt, p. 25 (plate); Von Oppenheim, *Der Tel-Halaf und die verschleierte Gottin*, p. 17, publishes a somewhat similar figure holding a kind of club.

monuments would be proof sufficient of the high development of personal religion in these regions. A relief with Hittite inscriptions, found near Ibriz, the old Kybistra, near the Cilician gates north of Tauros, shows us a deity with corn and grapes, and a priest adoring ;[1] he is evidently conceived, like Baal by the Semites of Canaan, as a local god of the earth and of vegetation. But the most striking of all the Hittite monuments, and one that is all-sufficient in itself for our present purpose, is the great series of reliefs on the rock at Boghaz-Keui in Cappadocia, not far from the site of the ancient Pteria.[2] Here is revealed a great and probably mystic pageant of an advanced polytheism with an elaborate ritual and a clear faith in high gods and goddesses : the whole procession seems to be passing along the narrowing gorge towards a Holy of Holies, the inner cave-shrine of the Mystery.

As we draw nearer to the Mediterranean, the facts are too well known to need reiteration here. Everywhere we find proofs of a personal theism reaching far back into prehistoric times : whether it be the cult of a high god such as the Cilician divinity, called Zeus or Herakles by the later Greeks, or the Lycian "Apollo," or a great goddess such as Ma of Comana, Cybele of Phrygia and Lydia. And now to all this testimony we can add the recently discovered monuments of a developed Minoan-Mycenaean religion with the elaborate ritual and worship of personal divinities, anthropomorphically imagined on the whole.

Such was the religious world lying before the feet of the Aryan Hellenes descending from the north ;

[1] Perrot et Chipiez, *Histoire de l'art*, iv. p. 354 (fig.).

[2] *Vide* Garstang, *The Land of the Hittites*, pl. lxiii.–lxxi. ; Messerschmidt, *op. cit.*, pp. 26–27.

and when their expansion across the islands to the Asiatic shores began, they would find everywhere a religion more or less on the same plane of development. Therefore if, as some students appear to imagine, the aboriginal Hellene had not developed personal gods before he arrived,[1] it would be irrational to conclude that Babylon had taught him to worship such beings in place of the vague and flitting daimon. His immediate teachers would be the Minoan-Mycenaean peoples; and that their theistic system was derived from Babylon is a theory lacking both positive evidence and *a priori* probability, as I may afterwards indicate. But that the proto-Hellenic peoples were in that backward condition of religious thought, is in the highest degree improbable. We must suppose that early in the second millennium they were slowly pushing their way down through the Balkans and through the country that is afterwards Thrace. So far as the earliest myths and records of this region throw some light on its prehistoric darkness, it appears to have been dominated by a great god. When the Thraco-Phrygian race, and possibly their kinsmen the Bithynoi, penetrated into the same region, they brought with them a father-god, who accompanied members of these stocks into Asia Minor, and settled in Phrygia, Pontus, and Bithynia by the side of an earlier goddess. Their cousins of the Indo-Iranian stock had certainly reached the stage of personal polytheism before 1400 B.C., as the epoch-making discovery of the Hittite-Mitani inscriptions at Boghaz-Keui, referred to above, sufficiently indicates.[2] We cannot believe that the Hellenes of the earliest

[1] e.g. *Outlines of Greek Religion*, by R. Karsten, p. 6.

[2] *Vide supra*, p. 46; cf. E. Meyer, *Das erste Auftreten der Arier in der Geschichte* in *Sitzungsb. d. konigl. Preuss. Akad. Wissensch.*, 1908, pp. 14 *seq.*

migration were inferior in culture to those Thracians, Bithynians, or even Indo-Iranians; for various reasons we must believe the reverse. And we now know from modern anthropology that peoples at a very low grade of culture, far lower than that which the Aryan stocks had reached at the time of the great migrations, have yet attained to the idea of personal and relatively high gods. In fact, that scepticism of certain philological theorists who, a few years ago, were maintaining that the Aryans before their separation may have had no real gods at all, is beginning to appear audacious and uncritical. At any rate, in regard to the Hellenes, the trend of the evidence is to my mind weighty and clear, making for the conviction that the different stocks not only possessed the cult of personal gods, but had already the common worship of certain deities when first they entered Greece. Otherwise, when we consider the mutual hostility of the various tribes and the geographical difficulties in the way of intercourse in early Greece, it would be difficult to explain the religious facts of the Homeric poems. We might, indeed, if Homer was our only witness, suspect him of representing what was merely local Achaean religion as common to all Greece. But we can check him by many other witnesses, by ancient myths and cults of diverse localities. Zeus was worshipped by some, at least, of the main tribes, when they were in the neighbourhood of Olympus: he is no more Thessalian than he is Dryopian. One of the earliest Hellenic immigrants were perhaps the Minyai, and their aboriginal god was Possidon. The ritual of Apollo preserves the clearest reminiscence of his entry from the north, and he is the high god of one of the oldest Hellenic tribes, the Dryopes, and the wide diffusion of his cult suggests that aboriginally it was a

common inheritance of several stocks. The force of the evidence that may be urged for this view is ignored by Wilamowitz in his brilliant but fallacious theory of the Lycian origin of the god. We must reject the hypothesis of a proto-Hellenic godless period; but, on the other hand, the mere fact that the early Greek religion appears on the same plane as the Mesopotamian, in respect of the worship of personal beings, gives no support at all to the theory of Oriental influence. If it is to be accepted, it must be sustained by more special evidence.

CHAPTER IV.

Anthropomorphism and Theriomorphism in Asia Minor and the Mediterranean.

A comparison made according to the test we have just applied is not so important as that which arises in the second stage of the inquiry. Assuming that the peoples on the east and west of the Aegean were already on the same religious plane when the first glimmer of what may be called history begins, can we discern certain striking resemblances or differences in their conception and imagination of divinity, sufficient to prove or disprove the theory of borrowing or of a movement across large areas of certain waves of religious influence emanating from a fixed centre?

The comparison now becomes more complex, and can only be summarily attempted. The first leading question concerns the way in which the personal divine being is imagined. In Mesopotamia was the religious perception dominatingly anthropomorphic, not merely in the sense that the higher divine attributes were suggested by the higher moral and spiritual life of humanity, but in the more material sense that the deity was imagined and represented habitually in human form? This question has been summarily treated in the first chapter. The Mesopotamian cults are mainly anthropomorphic; in the earliest hymns and liturgies, as well as in the art-monuments, the divinities appear to have been

imagined as glorified human forms. The figure of Shamash on the relief, where he sits enthroned inspiring Hammurabi,[1] the form of Ninni bringing the captives to Annabanini,[2] prove a very early dominance of anthropomorphic art in Mesopotamia. And the rule holds true on the whole of nearly all the great divinities of the Pantheon; the statue of Nebo the scribe-god in the British Museum,[3] and the representation of him on the cylinders, are wholly anthropomorphic. The seven planetary deities on the relief from Maltaija are human-shaped entirely;[4] we may say the same of the procession of deities on the relief from a palace of Nineveh published by Layard,[5] except that Marduk has horns branching from the top of his head; just as on the alabaster relief containing the scene of worship noted above,[6] and on the wall-relief in the British Museum he is represented with wings; but even the rigorous anthropomorphism of Greece tolerated both these adjuncts to the pure human type. The types of Ramman the weather-god,[7] and the representations of a Babylonian goddess, who is occasionally found with a child on her knee, and whom sometimes we may recognise as Ishtar, show nothing that is theriomorphic. On the other hand, we must note exceptions to this general rule. In one of the cuneiform inscriptions that describe certain types of deities, we read the following: "Horn of a bull, clusters of hair falling on his back; human countenance, and strength of a . . .; wings . . . and lion's body." And this description

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 43.
[2] *Vide supra*, p. 43.
[3] *Vide* Roscher, *Lexikon*, vol. iii. p. 48, *s.v.* "Nebo."
[4] *Vide* Roscher, *op. cit.*, iii. p. 67 (*Mitth. aus dem Orient. Sammlung. zu Berlin*, Heft xi. p. 23).
[5] *Monuments of Nineveh*, i. p. 65 (Roscher, *op. cit.*, ii. p. 2350).
[6] P. 43.
[7] Roscher, *op. cit.*, vol. iv. p. 29.

agrees exactly, as Jeremias has pointed out, with the winged colossal figures, half-lion, half-man, that guarded the gate of the palace of Nineveh. And we must therefore interpret them as gods, not as mere *genii*; and he gives some reason for regarding them as a type of Nergal, the god of the underworld.[1]

Further, we find in an inscription of Asarhaddon the following prayer: "May the gracious bull-god and lion-god ever dwell in that palace, protecting the path of my royalty." [2]

There is some doubt in regard to the winged figures with eagles' heads on the reliefs from Khorsabad, in the British Museum (pl. 38–40): they are represented holding pine-cones and a "cista mystica" on each side of the sacred tree, and might be *genii* engaged in worship; but on one of the reliefs Assur-nasir-Pal is standing before one of them in attitude of adoration.

But the most clear and definite evidence on this point is afforded by the legend and monuments of the god whom Berosos calls Oannes,[3] but whom modern Assyriology interprets as the ocean-born god Ea or Ae of Eridu, the god of all wisdom and science. According to Berosos, he had entirely a fish body, but a human head had grown under the head of the fish, human feet out of the fish's tail, and he spoke with human voice: a statue of this type was still existing at Babylon according to this writer in the time of Alexander. Now the exact type is presented in the form that appears on various Babylonian cylinders; there is one that presents the fish-man-god standing before the tree of Life—receiving a ray perhaps from the sun above: [4] and half

[1] Roscher, *op. cit.*, iii. p. 254–255.
[2] Schrader, *Keil. Bibl.*, ii. p. 141.
[3] *Frag. Hist. Graec.*, ii. p. 496. Frag. 1, 3.
[4] *Nineveh and Babylon*, pl. vi. (Roscher, *op. cit.*, iii. p. 580).

his form from the girdle downwards is preserved on a bas-relief published by Layard,[1] showing him holding the bread of life in one hand and in the other a vase containing the water of life. Here, then, is theriomorphism struggling with anthropomorphism as we see it strikingly in the religious monuments of Egypt.

But we have no need of the theory, dear to some anthropologists—that the earliest period of Mesopotamian religion was purely theriomorphic, when the deities were imagined and represented merely as animals, and that the human-shaped deities whom we find standing on lions in the Babylonian art had once been divine lions and nothing more, and had at a later period emerged from the animal into divine manhood. Theriomorphism and anthropomorphism can and generally do confusedly co-exist : neither in the lowest savagery or at the highest culture is there found a purely theriomorphic art or theriomorphic religion ; on the other hand, severe anthropomorphism among the ancient religions is to be found only in the Hellenic, and we may add in the Judaic, though here with a quite different mode of expression and far more sternly controlled. In Mesopotamia we have nothing that points to a direct worship of animals,[2] but we discern that the anthropomorphism is unstable ;

[1] Layard, *Nineveh and Babylon*, fig. 2. Roscher, *op. cit.*, iii. p. 580.

[2] In the *Amer. Journ. Archael.*, 1887, pp. 59–60, Frothingham cites examples from Assyrian cylinders of birds on pillars or altar with worshippers approaching : one of these shows us a seated god in front of the bird (pl. vii. 1) ; on another, a warrior approaches a tabernacle, within which is a horse's head on an altar, and near it a bird on a column (pl. vii. 2 ; cf. the boundary-stone of Nebuchadnezzar I., published by Miss Harrison, *Trans. Congr. Hist. Rel.*, 1908, vol. ii. p. 158) ; we find also a winged genius adoring an altar on which is a cock. But cocks and other birds were sacrificial animals in Babylonian ritual, and might be interpreted in all these cases as mere temporary embodiments of the divinity's power ; the human-shaped divinity is once represented by the side of the bird, and might always have been imagined as present though unseen.

the religious artist mainly clung to it, except when he was embodying forms of terror, the destructive demons, and expecially the powers of the lower world: for this purpose he selected the most portentous types of bestiality, such as we find on that bronze tablet, which used to be regarded as revealing an interesting glimpse into Babylonian eschatology: at least we may be sure that the lion-headed female above the horse in the canoe, at whose breasts two small lions are sucking, is the goddess of Hell.[1] It was probably through his association with the world of death that Nergal acquired something of the lion's nature, and even the very human goddess Ishtar might assume a lion's head when she was unusually wroth, though this rests on a doubtful text. We may say, then, with fair degree of accuracy, that the theriomorphic forms of Babylonian religious art belong to demonology; and in this domain the Babylonian artist has shown the same powerful imagination as the Mycenaean: it is the former to whom we are indebted for the attractively alarming type of the scorpion-man.

The phrase "unstable anthropomorphism" applies also to the religious literature, to the Sumerian-Babylonian hymns. The imagination of the poets in their highest exaltation was certainly anthropomorphic on the whole; the high divinities are conceived and presented with the corporeal, moral, and spiritual traits of glorified humanity. But often in the ecstasy of invocation the religious poets felt the human image too narrow and straightened for their struggling sense of the Infinite. Then the expression becomes mystic, and by virtue of a curious law that I indicated above, it avails itself of theriomorphic imagery.[2] I quoted the hymn

[1] Roscher, *Lexikon*, iii. p. 268.
[2] *Vide* chapter i. pp. 14–15.

to the warrior Marduk that invokes him as " Black Bull of the deep, Lion of the Dark House." Of still more interest is the invocation of Enlil, the earth-god of Sumer : " Overpowering ox, exalted overpowering ox, at thy word which created the world, O lord of lands, lord of the word of life, O Enlil, Father of Sumer, shepherd of the dark-haired people, thou who hast vision of thyself." [1] Seven times the words " overpowering ox " are added in this mystic incantation. In another hymn Enlil is " the Bull that overwhelms " ; Ea, " the Ram of Eridu."

But this is mystic symbolism, rather than a clear perception of divine personality ; and we may say the same of such vaguely picturesque phrases as " Bel, the great mountain," " Asur, the great rock," an expression parallel to our " Rock of Ages." [2]

It naturally happens in a religion of unstable anthropomorphism that the different personalities are unfixed and may melt away one into the other, or may become conceived as metaphysical emanations, thus losing concrete individuality. As Dr. Langdon remarks of Babylonian religious phraseology, " the god himself becomes mystified, he retires into the hazy conception of an all-pervading spirit, and his *word* becomes the active agent." [3] Thus even the strongly personal goddess " Nana " is identified with the word of Enlil ; she herself exclaims, " Of the Lord his word am I." His statement accords with the general impression that the liturgies and monuments of this vast and complex religion make upon the student. One discerns that the religious art, and to some extent the religious poetry, developed

[1] Langdon, *Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms*, p. 127.
[2] Schrader, *Keilinsch. Bibl.*, ii. pp. 79, 83.
[3] *Op. cit.*, p. xix.

and strengthened the anthropomorphic faith and perception of the people, but not so powerfully as to preclude a mysticising tendency towards metaphysical speculation that transcended the limits of a polytheism of concrete personalities. Even Allat, the goddess of Hell, she who was presented with the dog's head and the lions at the breast, was half spiritualised by the epithet which is rendered "spirit-wind of the consecrate." [1]

In the other ancient Semitic communities we find the same phenomenon, a prevailing anthropomorphism with some slight admixture of theriomorphic idea. At Bambyke, the later Hierapolis, we have the record and tradition of Atargatis-Derketo, of human and fish-form combined. In the cult of Esmun in Phoenicia, Baudissin [2] suspects the incarnation of the god in a snake, which brought about his later identification with Asklepios, and he suggests that the bronze serpent that healed the Israelites in the desert was borrowed from a Canaanite idol of a healing snake. The Astarte-images found in prehistoric Palestine are mainly of human type, but one gives her the curving horns of a ram, and a rude bronze was found at Tel Zakariya of an amphibious goddess with human head and the tail of a fish.[3] Something real underlies the statement of Sanchuniathon, quoted by Eusebios,

[1] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 159, n. 18. Compare with this the personification of abstract ideas; the children of Shamash are Justice (Kettu) and Law (Mésaru), and remain impersonal agencies, unlike the Greek Θέμις. A deified Righteousness (sedek) has been inferred from personal names that occur in the Amarna documents; *vide* Cook, *Palestine*, p. 93.

[2] *Vide* his article on "Eschmun-Asklepios," in *Orient. Stud. zu Th. Nöldeke am 70ten Geburtstag gewidmet*: the proofs are doubtful, but snake-worship in Phoenicia is attested by Sanchuniathon, Eus. *Praep. Ev.*, I, 10, 46.

[3] Cook, *Religion of Ancient Palestine*, pp. 30–31.

that Astarte placed on her own head the head of a bull.[1]

But these are exceptional phenomena; and as the Hellenes in the later period were usually able to identify the leading Semitic deities with their own, we may see in this another proof that the Western and Eastern religions were nearly on the same plane as regards their perception of divine personality.

Only, we discern signs in Canaan as in Mesopotamia, that the anthropomorphism is, as I have called it, unstable; for not only can the divinity be imagined as embodied in other forms than the human, but the demarcations of individuality tend at certain points to fall away: the most curious instance of this is that the female divinity seems at times to have been almost absorbed in the god. We must, however, distinguish here between what is real belief and what is mere theologic phrasing. In a hymn of praise to Ishtar, composed for the King Ashurbanapal, the equality of the goddess with the great Assyrian god Ahshur is quaintly expressed by the phrase, "like Ashur, she wears a beard"; but Jastrow[2] protests against the inference that the goddess was therefore really regarded as male in the Mesopotamian religion. And indeed this is probably only a fantastic expression of the idea that Istar is the compeer in power of the god, and has much of the masculine temperament. Even in the full vogue of an anthropomorphic religion which insists on the distinctions of sex, a mystical religious thinker could rise to the idea that the divinity might assume the powers

[1] *Praep. Ev.*, 1, 10, 31. Glaser, *Mittheilungen uber einige Sabaeische Inschriften*, p. 3–4, gives reasons for affirming the worship of black bulls in heathen Arabia; but it is not clear in what relation these stood to the high personal divinities.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 545.

of both natures, an idea of which we find a glimpse in the later Greek and Greek-Egyptian theosophy. Thus a Sumerian hymn to Enlil characterises him as "Lord of winds, father and mother who creates himself";[1] and a well-known hymn to Sin speaks of him as "Maternal Body that brings everything to birth," and in the next line as "Compassionate, gracious father."[2]

The close approximation of the goddess to the god is more clearly discernible in the Canaanite religion. On the Moabite Mesha stone, Ashtar-Chemosh appears as a double divinity; and one of the earlier Carthaginian inscriptions refers to a temple of Moloch-Astarte.[3] Again Astarte, in the inscription on the sarcophagus of Eshmounazar of Sidon, is called Astart-Shem-Baal, which signifies Astarte the Face of Baal; and in the Carthaginian inscriptions the same designation occurs for Tanit. Renan has interpreted the phrase as expressing the dogma that the goddess is an emanation of the god, but Dr. Langdon would explain it as arising from the close opposition of the two statues face to face, Astart-Shem-Baal merely meaning, then, "She who fronts Baal." Whichever interpretation be correct, such close assimilation of the pair might evolve here and there the concept of a bisexual divinity. Unless the evidence of the classical writers is false, it did so at a later period under Phoenician influences in Cyprus. Macrobius tells us that there was in that island a statue of a bearded deity in female dress, regarded as bisexual, and he quotes Philochoros as witness to the fact, and to the curious phenomenon in the ritual in which the

[1] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 223.
[2] Zimmern, *Babyl. Hymn. w. Gebete*, p. 11.
[3] *C. I. Sem.*, 250.

men wore female dress and the women male. This explains Catullus' phrase "duplex Amathusia" of the bisexual goddess. Servius and the Christian fathers repeat the statement, and Joannes Lydus asserts that the Pamphylians at one time worshipped a bearded Aphrodite;[1] if we trust his authority, we might explain the fact as due to late Semitic influence, which is somewhat attested by inscriptions on the coinage of Pamphylia under the Persian domination.[2] But, at the most, we can only regard this cult as a late phenomenon, a local eccentricity, and a morbid development of a certain vague idea that was working sporadically in the old Semitic religion. We have no right to assert, as some have occasionally ventured, that the Semitic peoples generally accepted the dogma of a bisexual divinity.

Turning now to the other great area of culture that lay between Mesopotamia and the coast, that of the Hittite kingdoms, we find that the Hittite deity is usually presented in human form. On the great relief of Boghaz-Keui, the distinctions of the human family appear in the divine forms, in whom we may recognise the father god, the mother goddess with her young son, or it may be, as Dr. Frazer suggests, with her young lover. And the other Hittite representations of divinity to which I have referred above are of purely human form, and so also are the small Hittite bronze idols in the Ashmolean Museum. Nevertheless here, as in Mesopotamia, the theriomorphic fancy was active at the same time. On the relief at Boghaz-Keui, nearest to the innermost shrine, the Holy of Holies, is an idol

[1] For references, *vide* my *Cults of the Greek States*, vol. ii., "Aphrodite," R. 113a.

[2] *Vide* Head, *Hist. Num.*, p. 586.

of human visage with a body composed of a bizarre arrangement of lion-forms ; and in the procession near to the main deities we note a strange representation of two bulls in mitred caps of Hittite fashion, and to these mystic beasts we may apply the name theanthropic, which Robertson Smith suggested for the sacrificial animal that was half-divine, half-human. And clearer evidence still is afforded by another relief found not far from this site at the palace of Euiuk, where a bull is represented on a pedestal with worshippers approaching.[1] He is not here the sacrificial animal, for he and the altar before him are on a higher plane, while the priest and priestess below are raising their hands to him as if in adoration, and are leading rams evidently as victims to the bull-god. We may be sure, then, that there was some close association of the Hittite divinity with the bull, as there was with the lions upon which both god and goddess are standing ; and this is further illustrated by the horns that adorn the conical cap of the god at Ibriz,[2] to whom the grapes and corn were consecrated.

Again, the relief on the gate at Sinjerli [3] affords us another clear example of a divinity only partly anthropomorphic : a god with the body of a man and the head of a lion ; as he bears a hunting weapon in one hand and a hare in the other, and on each shoulder a bird is sitting, we may regard him as a deity of the chase. Finally, from certain cuneiform texts found at Boghaz-Keui, and recently published and interpreted by Professor Sayce,[4] we gather that the eagle, probably the double-

[1] Perrot et Chipiez, *Histoire de l'art*, iv. fig. 329; cf. Garstang, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

[2] *Supra*, p 43.

[3] Messerschmidt, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

[4] *Journ. Roy. Asiat. Soc.*, 1909, p. 971.

headed eagle which appears as an ensign on Hittite monuments, was deified; for we appear to have a reference to "the house" or temple "of the eagle" (Bit Id Khu), and this fact may help to explain the figure of a man's body with a bird's head on a relief of Sinjerli.[1]

As regards the test, then, that we are at present applying, it seems that the Hittite and the Mesopotamian religions were more or less on the same plane, though we may suspect that theriolatry was stronger in the former. It is also important for our purpose to register in passing the clear proof of certain religious approximations, probably in the second millennium B.C., between the Hittites and the Assyrian Babylonian kingdom. The Hittite god Teshup, with the double-headed hammer or axe and the forked lightning in his hand, is of close kin and similar in type to the Canaanite, Syrian, and Babylonian Ramman-Adad, the god of storms.[2] But the evidence does not yet seem to me to make it clear which people or group of peoples was in this case the borrower, which the lender. And the same doubt arises in respect of the striking art-type of the divinity standing on the lion; we find it in the early Hittite monuments, such as the Boghaz-Keui sculptured slabs; and again on the relief of Gargamich, on which is a winged male deity standing on a lion and a priest behind him, also on a lion;[3] and later among the Tarsos representations of the Hittite Sandon: it was in vogue at the Syrian Bambyke and at Babylon. The assumption of Perrot[4] is that it was

[1] Luschan, *Ausgrabungen in Sendschirli*, Heft iii. Taf. 42, 43; cf. Garstang, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

[2] *Vide* Roscher, *op. cit.*, iii., *s.v.* "Ramman."

[3] Perrot et Chipiez, *op. cit.*, iv. p. 549, fig. 276; cf. fig. 278.

[4] *Op. cit.*, ii. pp. 642-644.

of Babylonian origin, but the art-chronology does not seem to speak decisively in this matter. It is not necessary here to prejudge this difficult problem: it does not directly affect our present question, as the type of the goddess with lions comes into Hellas only at a later period. As regards the other Anatolian peoples who came into close contact with the Hellenes, we may find abiding influences of certain Hittite religious ideas and motives of religious art. We may admit that the lion-borne goddess of Boghaz-Keui is the prototype of Kybele, even the crenelated headdress that she wears suggesting the turreted diadem of the later goddess: it is likely that the ancient type of Teshup, the weather-god with hammer or axe and the lightning, survived in Commagene in the cult-figure that was afterwards interpreted as Jupiter Dolichenus: and it may have influenced the ideas about the thunder-god in Pontus, as a primitive relief of a god brandishing a thunderbolt and holding a shield has been found near Amasia.[1] Speaking generally, we must pronounce the native pre-Hellenic religious art of the Asia Minor littoral, of Phrygia, Lydia, Caria, anthropomorphic, so far as it tried at all to embody the imagined form of the divinity. The record is generally blurred by the later Hellenic influences. But we have at least in Phrygia rude images of the pre-Hellenic Cybele; the intention of these is anthropomorphic, and in the rough outline of the goddess's form as hewn out of the rock of Sipylos above Smyrna, the Hellenes could discern their sorrowing Niobe. Where the anthropomorphism fails, as in the Phrygian monument, which shows Cybele seated with a phiale and human-shaped in other respects, but with a head fashioned like "the round capital of a

[1] Cumont, *Voyage d'exploration dans le Pont*, p. 139.

pillar,"[1] the influence of the aniconic fetich may be the cause. At any rate, we have no clear trace of theriomophism either in the legend nor in the monuments of the great mother, the Kybele of Phrygia, or the Mā of Cappadocia. The power of the mountain-goddess was incarnate in the lions, but we have no ground for saying that she herself was ever worshipped as a lion.

We turn at last to the Minoan-Mycenaean and proto-Hellenic periods; for our present purpose the two cannot well be kept apart, as much of the evidence concerning the former is derived from records of myths and religious customs that were in vogue in the later period. Our first glimpse of the Minoan religion, which Sir Arthur Evans more than any one else has revealed to us,[2] gave us the impression of an aniconic worship that had for its sacred "agalmata" such fetich objects as the sacred pillar or double-headed axe, but which did not express its actual imagination of its divinities in any art-type. If this were so, we should not be able to answer the question how far the Minaon religion was purely anthropomorphic until we have found the interpretation of Minoan writing. But our store of monuments has been much enriched by later discoveries in the Palace of Knossos, and in one of its private chapels in which the Cross was the central sacred emblem, Sir Arthur Evans found the interesting figure of the snake-goddess—purely human, but holding snakes in her hands and girdled with snakes, while before her stands a votary

[1] *Vide* Perrot et Chipiez, *op. cit.*, vol. iv. fig. 107; cf. the relief-figure of Cybele on a Phrygian rock-tomb, wearing on her head a polos, with two lions rampant raising their paws to her head, published by Ramsay, *Hell. Journ.*, 1884, vol. v. p. 245; cf. Perrot et Chipiez, iv. fig. 110 ("little more than the earlier columnar form of the goddess slightly hewn," Evans, *Hell. Journ.*, 1901, p. 166).

[2] *Vide* "Mycenaean Stone and Pillar-cult," *Hell. Journ.*, 1901.

brandishing a snake:[1] again, a Minoan signet-ring published by him[2] revealed the great mountain-goddess herself on the summit of a peak flanked by lions and holding a spear. These may be actual reproductions of cult-images; and many other gems and other works have now been published by him and others proving that the people who belonged to this great Aegean culture of the second millennium habitually conceived of their gods in human form, even if they did not as a rule erect their idols in their temples. Thus on a gem which shows us an act of worship performed by a female votary before a sacred pillar, a human-shaped god with rays round his head and holding a spear is hovering in the air above it;[3] and on the great sarcophagus of Praisos we have on the one side a complex scene of ritual, conspicuous for the absence of any idol or eikon of the divinity, and at the other end a human form of god, or it may be hero, standing as if he had just come forth from his shrine or heroön.[4] In fact, the Minoan-Mycenaean religious monuments have revealed to us at least three personages, anthropomorphically conceived, of the popular religion of the period that we may call pre-Hellenic: a great goddess, often represented as throned, with fruits and emblems of vegetation around her, or as standing on a mountain and associated with lions; a god who is sometimes conversing with her or is descending from the sky armed with spear and shield,[5] and sometimes rayed; thirdly, the goddess with the snake as her familiar.

[1] Evans, "Report of Excavations," *Ann. Brit. School*, 1902–1903, p. 92, fig. 63.

[2] *Ann. Brit. School*, 1900–1901, p. 29, fig. 9.

[3] Published by Evans in *Hell. Journ.*, 1901, p. 170, fig. 48.

[4] *Vide* Paribeni's publication in the *Monumenti Antichi della Accademia dei Lincei*, 1908 (xix.), pp. 6–86, pls. i.–iii.

[5] Cf. *Ann. Brit. School*, 1900–1901, p. 59, fig. 38; young god with shield and spear and lioness or mastiff by his side, on clay seal impression.

To this extent, then, the Minoan-Mycenaean peoples were on the same plane of religion as those of Mesopotamia : and the record of the anthropomorphic divinity can be traced in the Aegean area back to the fourth millennium B.C. by the nude figures in stone of a goddess of fecundity with arms pressed across her breasts, a type belonging to the Neolithic period.

In passing, let us observe that neither the earliest prehistoric art of the Mediterranean nor the great religious types of the Minoan divinities recall the art style of Mesopotamia.

But this developed anthropomorphism of the early Aegean civilisation is not the whole story. Modern research has accumulated evidence that seems to point to a theriomorphic religion in Crete and in Mycenaean Greece which has been supposed by some to have preceded the former in order of time and in the logical process of evolution, and which at any rate survived by the side of it. Traces of the same phenomenon have been noted in the Hittite area, and more faintly in the valley of the Euphrates. The first modern writer who proclaimed with emphasis the theriomorphic elements in the prehistoric religions of Greece was Mr. A. Lang in his *Custom and Myth,* connecting it with a theory of totemism that does not concern us here. Afterwards, a systematic treatment of the problem in the light of the monuments of the Cretan and Mycenaean periods was presented by Mr. Cook in a paper published in the *Hellenic Journal* of 1894 on "Animal Worship in the Mycenaean Age"; and again in 1895 by an essay on "The Bee in Greek Mythology": a very full collection of the materials, with some exposition of important religious theory, will be found in De Visser's treatise, *De Graecorum Diis non referentibus speciem humanam*

(1900). Miss J. Harrison has worked further along the same lines, and has published some special results in her paper read before the Congress of the History of Religions, 1908, and published in its *Transactions*, on "Bird and Pillar Worship in relation to Ouranian Divinities."

Now the material that forms the fabric of these researches is so intricate, the relevant facts so manifold and minute, that it is impossible to consider them in detail within the limits of this present inquiry, of which the leading object is an important question of history concerning the religious influence of the East on the West; and, again, the writers above mentioned are deeply concerned with theories about the origins, or at least the earlier stages in the evolution of religion. And as I am only comparing East and West in a limited and somewhat advanced period of their history, I am not necessarily bound to deal with problems of origin. Nevertheless, a summary survey of this group of facts may provide us with important clues towards the solution of our main question. But a few general criticisms of the assumptions which, whether latent or explicit, are commonly made in the writings just quoted, may be useful at the outset. First, one finds that the word "worship" is used very loosely by the ancients as well as by contemporary writers: and by its vague and indiscriminate employment an effort is made to convince us that the pre-Hellenic and proto-Hellenic world worshipped the lion, the ox, the horse, the ass, the stag, the wolf, the pig, the bird, especially the dove, the eagle, and lastly even the cock. We should have to deal with a savage religion rioting in theriolatry, and we should not need to trouble any longer about the theory of its Mesopotamian origin, for as we have seen theriomorphism played a very small part in the Sumerian-Babylonian cult. But one

must ask more precisely, What is worship; and what does lion-worship, for instance, imply? Are we to believe that every one of these animals was worshipped, the whole species being divine? And does their "worship" mean that the superstitious people prayed to them, built altars or sacred columns, or even shrines to them, and offered them sacrifice? It has become urgent to reserve some such strict sense for the word as this, in order to preserve a sense of the distinction between our ritual-service of a real personal divinity and the various, often trifling, acts that may be prompted by the uneasy feeling or reverential awe evoked by the presence of a curious or dangerous animal. Thus, to abstain from eating or injuring mice or weasels is not to worship mice or weasels: to lament over a dead sea-urchin is not to worship sea-urchins: to give a wolf a decorous funeral is not to worship wolves: to throw a piece of sacrificial meat to flies before a great sacrifice to some high divinity is not to worship flies. All these things the civilised Greeks could do, but they ought not for that to be charged with worshipping whole species of animals directly as gods. Next let us bear well in mind that secular animals, like secular things, can become temporarily sacred through contact with the altar: thus the ox who voluntarily approached the altar and ate of the grain or cakes upon it; might be believed by the Hellenes to become instantly divine, full of the life of the divinity, and most ceremonious respect resembling worship might be meted out to him; but we should not hastily believe that the Greeks who might feel like this towards that particular ox worshipped all oxen; or that the society of King Minos worshipped all axes wherever found, because in peculiar circumstances and ritual an axe might become charged with

divinity. Finally, I may again protest against the fallacy of supposing that theriomorphism always precedes anthropomorphism: for an ever-increasing mass of evidence forces one to the conviction that they are often co-existent and always compatible one with the other; if this is so, it is rash and unscientific to say, as is so easy to say and is so often said, when one meets in the Mediterranean or elsewhere a human god or goddess accompanied by a lion or a cock, that the anthropomorphic divinity has been evolved from the animal.

Looking now directly to the Minoan-Mycenaean monuments, before we consider the early Hellenic records, we must distinguish between those that are obviously cult-scenes and those that are not obviously but only hypothetically so, and this second class are those with which Mr. Cook's papers mainly deal. The former have been treated masterfully by Sir Arthur Evans in his paper on "Tree and Pillar Cult"; from these we gather that the worshipper did not usually pray before an idol, but before a pillar or a sacred tree combined often with horns of consecration or an axe; also that he imagined his deity generally in human form, the pillar serving as a spiritual conductor to draw down the divinity from heaven. Therefore I may remark that the phrase "pillar-cult" here, and in Miss Harrison's paper quoted above, does not express the inwardness of the facts. But the latter writer endeavours to prove the prevalence of a direct cult of birds in this period; and further maintains the dogma that "in the days of pillar and bird anthropomorphism was not yet." The Minoan monuments on which she relies are the great Phaistos sarcophagus, the trinity of terra-cotta pillars surmounted by doves found in an early shrine of the Palace of Knossos,[1] with

[1] *Ann. Brit. School*, 1901–1902, p. 29.

which are to be compared the dove-shrine of Mycenae and the gold-leafed goddesses of Mycenae with a dove perched on their heads ; and finally, the semi-aniconic idol of a dove goddess, with the dove on her head and her arms outspread like wings, found in another shrine of the palace of Knossos, and descending from a pre-Mycenaean traditional type.[1] Whatever we may think of these monuments, they cannot be quoted as the memorials of a time " when anthropomorphism was not yet " ; for the earliest of them, probably that mentioned last, is of later date than the type of the naked human-formed goddess of the Neolithic Aegean period.

The question depends wholly on the true interpretation of the monuments ; as regards the Phaistos sarcophagus, the exact significance of the ritual is still a matter of controversy, to which I may return later, when I compare the ritual of east and west ; this much is clear, that a holy service of blood-oblation is being performed before two sacred trees, into the top of which two axes are inserted and on the axes are two birds painted black. Is it immediately clear that " the birds are objects of a definite cult," as Miss Harrison maintains ?[2] This may be strongly disputed ; otherwise we must say that the axe and the tree are equally direct objects of cult. But the illuminative scene on the signet-ring described above[3] suggests that the function of the pillar was to serve as a powerful magnet to attract a personal divinity. And Sir Arthur Evans has well shown that the tree and the pillar were of equal value as sacred objects in Minoan-Mycenaean religion. A sacrifice doubtless of mystic and magical power is

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 98, fig. 56.
[2] *Trans. Cong. Hist. Relig.*, ii. p. 155.
[3] P. 65.

being performed before them here: the worshippers may well believe that the combined influence of blood-offering, sacred tree, and sacred axe will draw down the divinity of the skies. In what form visible to the eye would he descend? The carver of that signet-ring dared to show him above the pillar in human form, as the mind's eye though not the sense-organ of the worshipper discerned him. But the artist of the Phaistos sarcophagus is more reserved. As the Holy Ghost descended in the form of a dove, so the unseen celestial divinity of Crete might use any bird of the air as his messenger, perhaps by preference the woodpecker or dove. And this natural idea would be supported by the fact that occasionally birds did alight on the top of sacred columns, and they would then instantly be charged with the sanctity of that object and would be regarded as a sign of the deity's presence and as an auspicious answer to prayer and sacrifice. Thus many birds in Greece became sacred by haunting temples; and Dr. Frazer has suggested that the swallows and sparrows that nested on the temple or on the altar at Jerusalem acquired sanctity by the same simple religious logic.[1] But it is futile to argue that therefore the Hellenes and Hebrews once worshipped either the whole species of swallows and sparrows or any single one. And Sir Arthur Evans' own interpretation of the doves on the triple group of columns, as being merely "the image of the divine descent, and of the consequent possession of the bactylic column by a spiritual being," is sane and convincing.[2] This does not prove or necessarily lead to "bird-worship." Further, he suggests[3] that as the dove was originally posed on the top of the column

[1] *Op. cit.*, i. p. 254.
[2] *Ann. Brit. School*, 1900–1901, p. 29, n. 3.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 98.

as a gracious sign of the divine presence, so when the human form was beginning to take the place of the column the dove would then be seen on the human head, as in the case of the statuettes of goddesses mentioned above, and as it appeared on the head of the golden image at Bambyke, which some called Semiramis.[1] The close association of the Mediterranean goddess and of the goddess of Askalon, Phoenicia, and Bambyke with doves may have been caused by several independent reasons ; one may well have been the habitual frequenting of her temple by the birds. This would easily grow into a belief that the goddess when she wished to reveal something of her presence and power to the external eye would manifest herself in the bird. This we may call theriomorphic imagination that goes *pari passu* easily with the anthropomorphic. But none of these monuments come near to proving that this Mediterranean race directly worshipped birds, nor do they suggest any such theory as that the human divinity emerged from the bird. We shall, in fact, find that evidence of this kind that I have been examining, used recklessly in similar cases, leads to absurd results.[2]

Here it is well to remark in passing that the cult of

[1] Lucian, *De Dea Syr.*, 34 ; cf. Diod. Sic. 2, 5. Dove with " Astarte " on coins of Askalon, autonomous and imperial, Head, *Hist. Num.*, p. 679.

[2] According to Aelian, certain sparrows were sacred to Asklepios, and the Athenians put a man to death for slaying one (*Var. Hist.*, v. 17). Did Asklepios as an anthropomorphic divinity emerge from the sparrow ? What, then, should we say of the sacred snake who might better claim to be his parent ? Was Hermes as a god evolved from a sacred cock ? Miss Harrison believes it (*op. cit.*, ii. p. 161), because he is represented on a late Greek patera standing before a cock on a pillar. But the cock came into Europe perhaps one thousand years after Hermes had won to divine manhood in Arcadia. On the same evidence we might be forced to say that the goddess Leto came from the cock (*vide* Roscher's *Lexikon*, ii. p. 1968, cock on gem in Vienna, with inscription Αητω Μυχια).

the Dove-goddess is a test case for trying the question of Oriental influence on the west. It cannot be traced back to Babylon, and no one would now maintain the old theory that the dove-shrines of Mycenae were an import from the Phoenician Astarte cult. Sir Arthur Evans' discoveries enable us to carry back this particular worship in the Aegean to pre-Mycenaean times. We could with better right maintain that the Syrians borrowed it from the Aegean or possibly from Askalon, where, as Dr. Evans has pointed out, Minoan influences were strong. But the most reasonable view is that which he expresses that "the divine associations of the dove were a primitive heritage of primitive Greece and Anatolia." [1]

As regards Mr. Cook's theory of Mycenaean animal-worship, it is not now necessary to examine it at any length. It was based mainly on a comparison of a fairly large number of "Mycenaean" seals and gems from Crete and elsewhere showing monsters bearing animals on their shoulders or standing by them. He interpreted the "monsters" as men engaged in a religious mummery, wearing the skins of lions, asses, horses, bulls, stags, swine, that is, as ministers of a divine lion, ass, etc., bringing sacrificial animals to these animal-deities, and he raised the large questions of totemism and totemistic cult-practices. His theory presents a picture of zoolatric ritual that cannot be paralleled elsewhere in the world either among primitive or advanced societies. And we begin to distrust it when it asks us to interpret the figures in a gem-representation as an ass-man bearing two lions to sacrifice; for neither in Greece, Egypt, or

[1] *Ann. Brit. School*, 1900–1901, p. 30; cf. the paper by M. Salomon Reinach, "Anthropologie," vi., "La sculpture en Europe avant les influences Gréco-Romaines," p. 561.

Asia is there any record of a lion-sacrifice, a ceremony which would be difficult to carry out with due solemnity. The more recent discovery of a set of clay-sealings at Zakro in Crete by Dr. Hogarth; who published them in the *Hellenic Journal* of 1902, has rendered Mr. Cook's view of the cult-value of these "monsters" now untenable. They are found in combinations too widely fantastic to be of any value for totemistic or a zoolatric theory, and the opinion of archaeologists like Sir Arthur Evans and Winter [1] that these bizarre forms arose from modifications of foreign types, such as the Egyptian hippopotamus goddess, crossed at times with the hippokamp and the lion, has received interesting confirmation from the discovery of a shell relief at Phaistos showing a series of monsters with hippopotamus heads, and in a pose derived undoubtedly from a Nilotic type.[2] We may venture to say that the exuberant fancy of the Minoan-Mycenaean artist ran riot and amused itself with wild combinations of monsters, men and animals, to which no serious meaning was attached.

Only rarely, when the monsters are ritualistically engaged in watering a sacred palm tree or column,[3] does the religious question arise. And here we may find a parallelism in Assyrian religious art, in the representation of "winged genii fertilising the adult palms with the male cones"; but according to Sir Arthur Evans this motive is later in the Eastern art than in the Mycenaean. Perhaps only one type of monster found on these gems and seals is derived from a real theriomorphic figure of the contemporary religion, namely, the Minotaur

[1] Evans in *Hell. Journ.*, 1901, p. 169; Winter, *Arch. Anz.*, 1890, p. 108.

[2] Hogarth, *Hell. Journ.*, 1902, p. 92.

[3] *Vide* gem from Vapheio, published by Evans, *Hell. Journ.*, 1901, p. 101, fig. 1; cf. p. 117, figs. 13, 14.

type. A few of the Zakro sealings show the sealed figure of a human body with bovine head, ears, and tail[1]; and a clay seal-impression found at Knossos presents a bovine human figure with possibly a bovine head sealed in a hieratic attitude before a warrior in armour.[2] Such archaeological evidence is precarious, but when we compare it with the indigenous Cretan legends of the bull-Zeus and the union of Pasiphae with the bull, we are tempted to believe that a bull-headed god or a wholly bovine deity had once a place in Minoan cult.

To conclude, this brief survey of the Minoan-Mycenaean monuments points to a contemporary religion that preferred the aniconic agalma to the human idol, but imagined the divinity mainly as anthropomorphic, though this imagination was probably not so fixed as to discard the theriomorphic type entirely. Therefore this religion is on the same plane with that of Mesopotamia rather than with that of Egypt.

Turning now to the proto-Hellenic period, which, without prejudging any ethnic question, I have kept distinct from the Mycenaean, we have here the advantage of literary records to assist the archaeological evidence. I have stated my conviction that the earliest Hellenes had already reached the stage of personal polytheism before conquering the southern Peninsula; and the combined evidence of the facts of myths and cults justifies the belief that their imagination of the deity was mainly anthropomorphic. By the period of the Homeric poems, composed perhaps some five centuries after the earliest entrance of the Hellenes, we must conclude that the anthropomorphism as a religious

[1] Hogarth, *op. cit.*, pp. 79, 91.
[2] Evans, *Palace of Cnossus*, p. 18, fig. 7a.

principle was predominant in the more progressive minds that shaped the culture of the race: a minute but speaking example of this is the change that ensued in accordance with Homeric taste in the meaning of the old hieratic epithet βοῶπις; in all probability it originally designated a cow-faced goddess, but it is clear that he intends it for ox-eyed, an epithet signifying the beauty of the large and lustrous human eye. The bias that is felt in the religious poetry of Homer comes to determine the course of the later religious art, so that the religion, art, and literature of historic Greece may be called the most anthropomorphic or anthropocentric in the world. Yet we have sufficient proof that in the pre-Homeric age the popular mind was by no means bound by any such law, and that the religious imagination was unfixed and wavering in its perception of divinity: and the belief must have been general that the god, usually imagined as a man, might manifest himself at times in the form of some animal. Apollo Lykeios, the wild god of the woods, was evidently in the habit of incarnating himself in the wolf, so that wolves might be sacramentally offered to him or sacrifice offered to certain wolves.[1] In the Artemis legend of Brauron and Aulis we detect the same close communion of the goddess with the bear. Now, upon the fairly numerous indications in cult-legend and ritual that the deity was occasionally incarnate in the animal, much fallacious anthropological theory has been built. It is not now my cue to pursue this matter *au fond*. But it is necessary for my purpose to emphasise the fact that there is fair evidence for some direct zoolatry in the proto-Hellenic period, though there is less than is often supposed, and it needs always careful criticism.

[1] *Vide* my *Cults*, iv. p. 115.

As I have already said, the ancients of the later learned period were often vague and unprecise when they spoke of "the worship" of animals. Thus Clemens informs us [1] that the Thessalians "worshipped" ants, and on the authority of Euphorion that the Samians "worshipped" a sheep: the word used in each case being σέβειν. But accurate statements concerning religious psychology demand the nicest discrimination: "a little more, and how much it is." We may suspect that the word σέβειν was as vaguely used in antiquity as the term "worship" in loose modern writing: and it is to be remarked that when one authority uses this word, another may employ the verb τιμᾶν, which does not imply so much. For instance, Clemens states that the Thebans "honoured" the weasel; Aelian, that they "worshipped" it.[2] We are nearly always left in doubt how much is meant: whether the animal was merely treated reverentially and its life spared, or whether sacrifice and prayers were offered to it: the former practice may be found in almost any society modern or ancient, the latter is savage zoolatry, and is a fact of importance for the religious estimate of a people.

I cannot consider all the cases which are given with sufficient fullness in the work that I have cited by De Visser.[3] But the instance cited above—the Samian worship of the sheep [πρόβατον]—shows us how little we have to build our theories on. It is quite possible that such a story arose from some ritual in which the sheep was offered reverentially, treated as a theanthropic

[1] *Protrept.*, p. 34, P.

[2] *Protrept.*, p. 34; P.; Aelian, *Nat. An.*, xii. 5. Similarly, when Diodorus tells us that "the Syrians honoured doves as goddesses" (2, 5), the statement lets little light on the real religious feeling and religious practice of the people.

[3] *Op. cit.*, pp. 129–152.

animal, half-human, half-divine, like the bull-calf of Tenedos in the cult of Dionysos,[1] an interesting form of sacrifice to which I shall have occasion to refer again. Clear records of actual sacrifice to animals in Greece are exceedingly rare. We have the quaint example of the so-called "Sacrifice" to the flies before the feast of Apollo on the promontory of Leukas; this I have discussed elsewhere,[2] pointing out that it seems only a ritual trick to persuade the flies to leave the worshippers alone, and certainly does not suggest the "worship" of flies.[2] There is also a dim ritual-legend attaching to the temple of Apollo the wolf-god in Sikyon; which appears to point to some sacrifice to wolves in or near the temple at some early period.[3] The third case is more important: the "sacrifice to the pig," which Athenaeus, quoting from Agathokles of Kyzikos, attests was an important service at Praisos in Crete, performed as a προτελὴς θυσία, that is, as a preliminary act in the liturgies of the higher religion.[4] The ritual-legend explained the act as prompted by the service that a sow had rendered to the infant Zeus; but it remains mysterious, and we would like to have had more clear information as to the actual rite. Finally, we have the most important type of zoolatric ritual in Greece, the worship of certain sacred snakes: various records attest this in the cult of Trophonios at Lebadeia and in the temple of Athena Polias at Athens; in the cult of Zeus-Meilichios in the Piraeus, in the sacred grove of Apollo in Epeiros, probably in the shrines of Asklepios at Epidauros and Kos, and elsewhere.

[1] See my *Cults*, v. pp. 165, 167, R. 79.

[2] *Anthropological Essays presented to E. B. Tylor*, p. 99.

[3] *Cults*, iv. p. 115.

[4] This view of the passage is more probable than that which I have taken in *Cults*, i. p. 37 (R. 8, p. 141).

Now it is important to note that these ritual records nowhere suggest that whole species of animals were worshipped, but that only certain individuals of that species, haunting certain places to which a sense of religious mystery attached, such as a cave or a lonely grove, or else found in or near some holy shrine, were thus marked out as divine. Also, we observe that in all the examples just quoted, the cult of the animal is linked to the cult of some personal god or goddess or hero : the snake, for instance, is the natural incarnation of the underworld divinity or hero. The only exception to this latter rule that may be reasonably urged is the prehistoric worship of Python at Delphi, which, as Dr. Frazer has pointed out, is curiously like the ritual and cult of a fetich-snake in Dahomey.[1] Yet, for all we know, Python, who in the earliest version of the story is of female sex, may at a very early time have been regarded not as a mere snake, but as an incarnation of the earth-goddess Gaia, who ruled at Delphi before Apollo came. The question whether the ancestors of the Hellenes or the pre-Hellenic peoples with whom they mixed were ever on the lowest plane of theriolatry does not concern us here. What is important is, that the records, both Mycenaean and Hellenic, justify us in believing that the dominant religion in Greece of the second millennium B.C. was the worship of personal divinities humanly conceived who could occasionally incarnate themselves in animal form, and that where animal worship survived it was always linked in this way to the cults of personal polytheism. From the Homeric period onward, the higher Hellenic spirit shows itself averse to the theriomorphic fashion of religion ; yet this never disappeared wholly from

[1] *Commentary on Pausanias*, vol. iii. p. 55.

the lower circles. Arcadia, the most backward and conservative of the Greek communities, never accepted the rigid anthropomorphic canon. This is shown by the record of the Phigaleian Demeter with the horse's head; the mysterious goddess Eurynome of Phigaleia, half-woman, half-fish; the Arcadian Pan, the daimon of the herds, imagined as with goat legs and sometimes with goat's head; and, finally, by the Arcadian idols of the Roman period found at Lykosoura in 1898, representing the female form with the head of a cow.[1]

This résumé of the facts, so far as it has gone, appears to justify the theorem with which it started, that the "Mycenaean" peoples and proto-Hellenes in the second millennium were on the whole, in respect of the morphology of their religion, on the same plane as those of the Euphrates valley; only it appears that theriomorphism played slightly more part in the cults and legends of the West than in those of the Sumerian-Babylonian culture. It is obvious to any student of comparative religion that such general similarity which we have here observed, and which we might observe if we compared early Greece with Vedic India, neither proves nor disproves a theory of borrowing. And so far there seems no occasion for resorting to such a theory, unless the type of the fish-goddess at Phigaleia be considered a reason for supposing Semitic influences here at work and for tracing her ancestry to Derketo of Bambyke. For such transference of cult we might have to invoke the help of Phoenicians, who arrive on the scene too late to help us in the present quest, and who are not likely to have been attracted into the interior of Arcadia.

[1] *Bull. Corr. Hell.*, 1899, p. 635 (plate).

CHAPTER V.

The Predominance of the Goddess.

The next clue that I propose to follow in our general comparison is the relative prominence of the goddess-cult in the areas that we are surveying. The subject is of importance and interest, partly because it may throw some light on the question of the interdependence of the adjacent religions, partly because it brings into view certain striking facts of religious psychology. A religion without a goddess is liable to differ markedly in tone and colour, and probably in ritual, from those that possess one. Wherever anthropomorphism is allowed free play, the same instinct which evolves the father-god will evolve the mother-goddess; and when the religion is one of the type which Tiele calls "Nature-religions," one, that is, where ideas reflecting the forces of the natural world lie on the surface of the conception of the divine personality, some of these forces are so naturally regarded as feminine that the evolution of a goddess appears inevitable; and the only world-religions that have rejected this idea are the Judaic, the Islamic, and Protestant Christianity. Now goddess-cult is often found to exercise a powerful influence on the religious emotion; and the religious psychology of a people devoted to it will probably differ from those who eschew it; often it will be likely to engender a peculiar sentiment of tenderness, of sentimentality in

an otherwise austere and repellent religious system; and the clinging entreaty of the child is heard in the prayers or reflected in the ritual; and just as the mother frequently stands between the children and the father as the mild intercessor, so the goddess often becomes the mediator of mercy to whom the sinners turn as their intercessor with the offended god. Such was Isis for the Graeco-Roman world; such at times was Athena for the Athenians; such is the Virgin for Mediterranean Christendom.

Or the goddess may be more merciless than any god, more delighting in bloodshed, more savage in resisting progress: such often was Artemis for the Greeks, such is Kala at this moment in India, a dangerous and living force that threatens our rule. Again, the goddess may encourage purity in the sexual relations; this was the potential value of the ideal of Artemis in Greece, and perhaps the actual value of Mariolatry in the Middle Ages. Or the goddess-cult may be the source of what to us appears gross licentiousness, as was the case in Babylon and some parts of Asia Minor. This discordance in the character of goddess-cults may reflect the diversity of the masculine feeling towards women, and also to some extent the position of women at different stages of culture in the family and in the State. The whole subject has many fascinating aspects, which relevance prevents me presenting in detail. I have considered elsewhere the sociologic questions involved in goddess-cult;[1] and I must limit my attention here to its value as ethnic evidence.

In Mesopotamia the phenomenon presents itself at the very earliest period of which we have record. The

[1] *Archiv. für Religionswissenschaft*, 1904, "Sociologic hypotheses concerning the position of women in ancient religion."

monument already described [1] on which the goddess Nini is presenting captives to the King Annabanini; attests the prevalence of goddess-cult in the third millennium; and Tiele supposes—without, I think, sufficient evidence—that it was stronger in the Sumerian than in the Semitic period. At all events, the conquering Semites may have found the cult of goddesses well developed in the land; and in all probability they brought at least one of their own with them, namely, Ishtar, whose name has its phonetic equivalents in Semitic Anatolia. Also at least by the second millennium B.C., the Babylonian pantheon was organised after the type of the human family to this extent, that each male divinity has his female consort; and it would not help us now to consider the theorem put out by Jeremias and others that the various Babylonian goddesses are all emanations and varieties of one original All-mother. Only the mighty Ishtar remains for the most part aloof from the marriage system; and her power transcends that of the other goddesses. Originally the chief goddess of the Sumerian Erech, she was raised by the Assyrians to the highest position next to their national god Asshur; [2] and for them she is the great divinity of war, who, armed with bow, quiver, and sword, orders the battle-ranks. In a famous hymn,[3] perhaps the most fervent and moving of all the Babylonian collection, she seems exalted to a supreme place above all other divinities; another [4] displays the same ecstasy in adoration of the goddess Belit, imputing omnipotence to her, as one to whom the very gods offer prayers. The same idea may be expressed in a difficult

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 43.
[2] *Vide* Jastrow, *op. cit.*, i. p. 216.
[3] Zimmern, *Bab. Hymn. u. Gebete*, p. 20.
[4] *Ib.*, p. 24.

phrase in a hymn to Nebo [1] which contains his dialogue with Assurbanipal: "Nebo, who has grasped the feet of the divine goddess, Queen of Nineveh," the goddess who came to be regarded as Ishtar.

From such isolated indications we might conclude that the Babylonian-Assyrian religion was more devoted to the goddess than to the god. We should certainly be wrong, as a more critical and wider survey of the facts, so far as they are at present accessible, would convince us. These hymns imputing supreme omnipotence to the goddess, whether Ishtar or another, may be merely examples of that tendency very marked in the Babylonian liturgies, to exalt the particular divinity to whom worship is at that moment being paid above all others. The ecstatic poet is always contradicting himself. To the omnipotent Belit, in the last-mentioned hymn, a phrase is attached which Zimmern interprets as "she who carries out the commands of Bel," as if after all she were only a vicegerent. In the beautiful prayer to Ishtar proffered by the Assyrian King Asurnasirabal (18th cent. B.C.) he implores her to intercede for him; "the Priest-King, thy favourite . . . with Thy beloved the Father of the gods." [2] The beloved wife naturally plays the Madonna part of the intercessor; thus Sanherib prays that Ninlil "the consort of Ashur, the mother of the great gods, may daily speak a favourable word for Sanherib, the king of Assyria, before Ashur." [3] But the intercessor is not supreme; and in spite of the great power of Ishtar and the fervent

[1] A. Jeremias in Roscher's *Lexikon*, vol. iii. p. 62, *s.v.* "Nebo."

[2] *Zeitschr. f. Assyriologie*, 1890, p. 72.

[3] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 525; cf. the inscription of the last of the Babylonian kings, Nabuna 'id, who prays to Ningal, the mother of the great gods, to plead for him before Sin (*Keilinschr. Bibl.*, iii. p. 103).

devotion she aroused, the state-pantheon is predominantly masculine.

Nor can we, looking at the ancient records of the other Semitic peoples, which are often too scanty to dogmatise about, safely speak of the supremacy of the goddess in any Semitic community, except in Sidon. All that we find everywhere, except among the Israelites, is a goddess by the side of a god. According to Weber, in his treatise, "Arabien vor dem Islam," [1] the aboriginal god of all the Semites when they were in the nomadic condition was the moon-god; and the male divinity is nowhere found to be displaced. He is prominent among the polytheistic Arabs under the name Athtar.[2] Some of the Arab deities in North Arabia are revealed to us in an inscription dating probably from the fifth century B.C., which mentions the gods Salm, Sangala, Asira, and of these Salm was evidently a war-god, as he is represented on a relief with a spear.[3]

The Aramaic inscriptions only reveal the goddess Ishtar by the side of many powerful gods such as Ramman, Adad the god of storms, Shamash the sun-god, Reshef the god of lightning and war, Baal-charran the Lord of Harran.[4] An eighth-century Aramaic inscription found at Sinjerli in North Syria, written in the reign of Tiglath-Pileser III., mentions no goddess, but regards the kings as under the protection of Hadad, Elreshef, and Shamash.[5] Even in Canaan and Phoenicia we have no reason to say that Astarte rose above Baal; such an epithet as "the Face of Baal" appears to maintain the supremacy of the God. In Moab we have

[1] *Der Alte Orient* (1904), p. 20.
[2] Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 19.
[3] *C. I. Sem.*, 2, 1, n. [2], 113.
[4] Sanda, *Der Alte Orient*, "Die Aramäer," p. 24.
[5] Lagrange, *Études sur les religions sémitiques*, p. 492.

the evidence of the Mesha stone, which mentions the divine pair Ashtor-Chemosh, and in Numbers[1] the Moabites are called the people of Chemosh. But we have Phoenician inscriptions of the period of Persian supremacy in which the king of Byblos, Jachumelek, speaks of himself as raised to the kingdom by the Baalat, the queen-goddess of that state; and he prays to her that the queen may give him favour in the eyes of the gods and in the eyes of the people of his land.[2] Astarte was *par excellence* the city-goddess of Sidon, and on the later Imperial coinage we see her image drawn in a car. Two representations of her have been found, in one of which she is seated in front of the king,[3] the other shows her embracing him.[4] King Tabnit of Sidon, whose sarcophagus is in the Museum of Constantinople, styles himself "priest of Astarte, King of the Sidonians."[5] But in the other Phoenician settlements, such as Tyre, Cyprus, and Carthage, the memorials of the male divinity, whether Baal, Baal Samin, Baal Ammon, Reshef Mikal, Esmun-Melqart, are at least as conspicuous. It is likely that at certain places in the Mediterranean the Semites were touched by the influences of the aboriginal Aegean goddess's cult; this may well have been the case at Sidon, and still more probably at Askalon, and it may have penetrated as far as Bambyke.

Speaking generally, however, we may conclude that among the early Semites the male divinity was dominant. And if we could believe that this is a reflection in their theology of the patriarchal system in society, let us observe that the earliest Babylonian

[1] xxi. 29.
[2] Von Landau, *Die phönizischen Inschriften*, p. 13.
[3] *C. I. Sem.*, 1, ii. ad init.
[4] *Ib.*, 1, 7, p. 2.
[5] Von Landau, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

evidence proves that the patriarchal type of family was dominant in Babylonia in the third millennium.

Passing over to the non-Semitic group of Anatolian cults, and considering first the Hittite, we have ample evidence in the great relief of Boghaz-Keui of the importance of the goddess; and it may well be, as Dr. Frazer has conjectured, that that monument; on which we see the great god borne on the shoulders of his worshippers to meet the goddess on the lion, gives us the scene of a Holy marriage.[1] We find the male and female divinity united in a common worship on a relief found near Caesarea in the middle of Cappadocia, on the left side of which is depicted a warrior-god standing before a pillar-shaped altar, while a man in the guise of a warrior is pouring a libation before him; on the right is a similar scene, making libation before a seated goddess, on whose altar a bird is seated.[2] Besides this, we have another type of goddess shown us on a Hittite votive-relief, on which is carved a large seated female figure with a child on her knees; we may surely interpret this as a θεὰ κουροτρόφος.[3] Again, on two of the reliefs at Euzuk we find a seated goddess holding a goblet and approached with prayers, libations, and other offerings by priest and priestess,[4] and we may venture to add to this list of Hittite types the mysterious veiled goddess found by Von Oppenheim at Tel-Halaf in Mesopotamia on the Chabur, a branch of Euphrates, with an inscription containing the name Asshur, a work which, on the evidence of other cuneiform inscriptions found on the site, he would date near to

[1] *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*, 2nd ed., p. 108; Garstang, *op. cit.*, pl. lxv.

[2] Messerschmidt, *Die Hettiter*, pp. 27, 28.

[3] Perrot et Chipiez, *op. cit.*, figs. 280, 281.

[4] Garstang, *op. cit.*, pl. lxxiii. pp. 262–263, 267–268.

900 B.C.[1] But this evidence in no way amounts to any proof or affords any suggestion of the predominance of the goddess—and the Tel-El-Amarna correspondence of the Hittite kings implies that the male and female divinity were linked in an equal union in the Hittite religion. The text of the treaty between Rameses II. and the Kheta (*circ.* 1290 B.C.) includes various sun-gods, Sutekh, the Egyptian name for the Hittite war-god, and Antheret (possibly a form of the name Astoret), and other goddesses called "the Queen of Heaven, the Mistress of the Soil, the Mistress of Mountains."[2] Can we draw any conclusions from that extraordinary monument from Fassirlir[3] on the borders of Lycaonia and Pisidia, representing a young god in a high cap that suggests Hittite fashion, standing on the neck of a stooping goddess at whose side are two lions? This might seem a naïve indication of male supremacy; but the sex of the supporting figure does not seem clear.[4]

Coming now to the Asia-Minor shore, where in the first millennium B.C. the Hellenic colonisation and culture flourished, we find the traces of a great goddess-cult discoverable on every important site; though recorded only by later writers, as a rule, and interpreted to us by the later Greek names, such as Artemis, Leto, Aphrodite, more rarely Athena, we can still discern clearly that she belongs to a pre-Hellenic stock. The evidence of this can be gathered from many sources, and it is un-

[1] *Der Alte Orient*, 1908; *Der Tel-Halaf und die verschleierte Göttin*, pp. 33, 36.

[2] *Vide* Cook, *Religion of Ancient Palestine*, p. 73; Winckler, *Tel-el-Amarna Tablets*; Garstang, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

[3] Published by Ramsay, *Cities of St. Paul*, p. 134, fig. 7.

[4] Garstang, *op. cit.*, pp. 175–176, interprets the figure as a priest.

necessary to detail it here. What is more important, and not so easy, is to detect clear proof of the predominance of the goddess over the god, a phenomenon that has not yet presented itself clearly in the Semitic communities, except at Sidon and perhaps Byblos. We find goddess-cult in Cilicia, where "Artemis Sarpedonia" is a name that trails with it Minoan associations;[1] but, as Dr. Frazer has pointed out,[2] at least at Tarsos and Olba it appears that the male deity was the dominant power. At the former city a long series of coins attests the supremacy of Baal-Tars and Sandon-Herakles. At Olba the ruling priesthood were called the Τευκρίδαι, and claim descent from Teukros and Aias, but Greek inscriptions giving such names as "Teukros" the priest, son of Tarkuaris, support the view that Teukros is a Hellenisation of the divine Hittite name Tarku. It is in Lycia where we ought, in accordance with a popular theory, to find the clearest proof of goddess-supremacy; for we know that the Lycians had the matrilinear family system, and this was supposed by Robertson Smith to lead logically to that religious product.[3] And recently we have heard Professor Wilamowitz[4] brilliantly expound the theory that Leto was the aboriginal mother-goddess of Lycia, called there in the Lycian tongue "Lada," and worshipped as supreme with her son Apollo, both of whom the Hellenes found there, and while they transformed Lada "the Lady-goddess" into Leto, surnamed Apollo Λητοίδης, in obedience to the Lycian rule of calling a son after his mother. And where a son is worshipped merely as the son of his

[1] *Vide* my *Cults*, vol. ii., Artemis-References, R. 79m.

[2] *Adonis*, etc., 2nd ed., p. 129.

[3] *Religion of the Semites*, p. 52.

[4] In lecture delivered in Oxford on "Apollo," and published 1909; cf. his article in *Hermes*, 1903, p. 575.

mother, we may regard the mother-goddess as supreme. The theory about Apollo's Lycian origin, which, I think, contradicts all the important facts, does not concern us here. It is his view that Leto is the aboriginal and paramount divinity of Lycia which we would wish to test. So far as it rests on the equation between Leto and Lada, its philology is bad ; for, as Dr. Cowley has pointed out on the evidence of Lycian-Greek transcribed names, the Greeks would not have transcribed Lada as Leto. Furthermore, the geography of the Leto-cult gives no *vraisemblance* to the theory of its Lycian origin ; neither have we any proof at all of the cult of any goddess in Lycia at an early period, though no doubt it existed ; the coin of Myra, showing a goddess emerging from the split trunk of a tree,[1] is of the Imperial period, but preserves an ancient legend and an archaic idol-type. But the earliest fact of Lycian religion recorded is the predominance of Apollo, and the Lycians maintained him as their chief divinity throughout their history and long after the very early influences of Hellenic colonisation had waned. The inscriptions of Lycia that mention Leto are all of the later period ; her temple near Xanthos and her two holy groves on the coast that Strabo mentions[2] are just on the track along which the earliest Hellenic influence travelled : and the most tenable view is that the Hellenes introduced her. In Caria, at Labranda, and again in the vicinity of Stratonikeia, we have proof of the early supremacy of a great god whom the Hellenes called Zeus, attaching to him in the latter centre of cult the Carian name of Panamaros, and associating him with a native goddess called Hera or

[1] *Cults*, vol. ii., " Artemis " Coin-Pl. B, n. 28.
[2] Pp. 651, 652, 665.

Hekate, who did not claim to be the predominant partner.[1]

It is not till we come to the neighbourhood of Ephesos that we can speak positively of goddess-supremacy. Artemis, as the Greeks called her here, is admittedly πρωτοθρονία, the first in power and in place. Her brother Apollo himself served as the στεφανηφόρος of the Artemis of Magnesia, that is, as her officiating magistrate,[2] and Artemis of Magnesia we may take to be the same aboriginal goddess as the Ephesian. Certain features of her worship will be considered later in a comparative survey of ritual and cult-ideas. I will only indicate here the absence of any proof of the Semitic origins of the Ephesian Artemis,[3] and the associations that link her with the great mother-goddess of Phrygia. When we reach the area within which this latter cult and its cognate forms prevailed, we can posit the predominance of the goddess as a salient fact of the popular religion imprinting indelible traits upon the religious physiognomy of the people. The god Attis was dear to the aboriginal Phrygian as to the later generations, but he was only the boy-lover, the young son who died and rose again. The great goddess was supreme and eternal; and her power spread into Lydia, Cappadocia, Pontus, and Galatia, and far and wide in the later period across the sea.

[1] The inscriptions throwing light on the cult at Panamara are contained in *Bull. Corr. Hell.*, 11, 12, 15 (years 1887, 1888, 1891); cf. the article in Roscher's *Lexikon*, vol. iii., *s.v.* "Panamaros."

[2] *Vide* my *Cults*, vol. iv. p. 173; cf. *ib.*, *Apollo Geogr. Reg.*, *s.v.* "Phrygia," p. 452, and R. 57.

[3] The type with many breasts might have been suggested by Babylonian symbolism, for the Goddess of Nineveh is spoken of as four-breasted (*vide* Jeremias in Roscher's *Lexikon*, vol. ii., *s.v.* "Nebo"), but Dr. Hogarth's excavations have shown that this form of the Ephesian idol is late.

Her counterpart in Cappadocia was Mā, the great goddess of Comana, in whose worship we hear nothing of the male divinity. In this wide area, governed by the religion of the Great Mother, we can trace a similar ritual and something of the same religious psychology in the various peoples: orgiastic liturgy and ecstatic passion, a craving for complete identification with the goddess that led to acts of sexual madness such as emasculation; also a marked tone of sorrow and tenderness in the legends and religious service. In following back to its fountain-head the origins of this cult, we are led inevitably to Minoan Crete.

There are many links revealed both by legend and cult that associate Crete with the country adjacent to the Troad, with Lydia and Caria. And we may tentatively hold to the dogma that Kybele-Rhea, Hipta of Lydia, who appears now as a virgin, now as a mother-goddess, Mā who appears in Caria, but whose chief historic centre was Comana of Cappadocia, were all descended from or specialised forms of an aboriginal Aegean or Anatolian goddess whose cult was also maintained by the Hittites. Of her nature and ritual I may speak later. I am only concerned here with the correctness of the view put forward by Sir Arthur Evans.[1] "It is probable that in the Mycenaean religion as in the later Phrygian, the female aspect of divinity predominated, fitting on, as it seems to have, down to the matriarchal system. The male divinity is not so much the consort as the son or the youthful favourite." If we put aside the suggestion of a matriarchal theory here, the main idea in this judgment accords generally with the evidence that the author of it has himself done most to accumulate and to present to us. It is

[1] *Hell. Journ.*, 1901, p. 168.

not insignificant that the earliest type of Aegean idol in existence is that of a goddess, not a god; and in the more developed Minoan period the representations of the goddess are more frequent and more imposing than those of the god; while in the few scenes of cult where the male deity appears in her company, he appears in a subordinate position, either in a corner of the field or standing before her throne.[1] And a strong current of early Greek legend induces us to believe that when the earliest Hellenes reached Crete they found a powerful goddess-cult overshadowing the island, associated with the figure of a young or infant god: hence spread the Cretan worship of Rhea and the Μήτηρ τῶν θεῶν, and hence there came to a few places on the Hellenic mainland, where Minoan influence was strong, the cult and the cult-legend of the infant Zeus.[2] Yet we must not strain the evidence too far; besides the youthful or infant Cretan god, there may have been the powerful cult of a father-god as well. On three monuments we catch a glimpse of the armed deity of the sky.[3] What is more important is the prominence of the double-headed axe in the service of the Minoan palace; and this must be a fetichistic emblem mystically associated with the thunder-god, though occasionally the goddess might borrow it. The prominence and great vogue of this religious emblem detracts somewhat from the weight of the evidence as pointing to the supremacy of the female divine partner. It is Zeus, not Rhea, that inspired Minos, as Jahwé inspired Moses, and Shamash Hammurabbi. Yet the view is probably right on the whole that the mother-goddess was a more frequent figure in

[1] *Vide op. cit.*, p. 108, fig. 4, and p. 175, fig. 51.

[2] *Cults*, vol. i. pp. 36–38; vol. iii. pp. 294–296.

[3] Cf. those cited in note [1] above, and the shield-bearing figure painted on the tomb of Milato in Crete (*ib.* p. 174).

the Minoan service, and was nearer and dearer to the people.

May we also regard her as the prototype of all the leading Hellenic goddesses? The consideration of this question will bring this particular line of inquiry to a close.

If we find goddess-supremacy among the early Hellenes, shall we interpret it as an Aryan-Hellenic tradition, or as an alien and borrowed trait in their composite religion? If borrowed, are they more likely to have derived it from the East or from their immediate predecessors in the regions of Aegean culture? The latter question, if it arises, we ought to be able to answer at last.

We might guard ourselves at the outset against the uncritical dogma which has been proclaimed at times that the goddesses in the various Aryan polytheisms were all alien, and borrowed from the pre-Aryan peoples in whose lands they settled. Any careful study of the Vedic and old-Germanic, Phrygo-Thracian religions can refute this wild statement: the wide prevalence in Europe of the worship of "Mother Earth," which Professor Dieterich's treatise establishes,[1] is sufficient evidence in itself. Nor could we believe that the early Aryans were unmoved by an anthropomorphic law of the religious imagination that is almost universally operative. The Hellenic Aryans, then, must be supposed to have brought certain of their own goddesses into Greece, and perhaps philology will be able one day to tell us who exactly they were. On linguistic and other grounds, Dione and Demeter may be accepted as provedly old Hellenic: on the same grounds, probably, Hera; also the name and cult of Hestia is certainly "Aryan,"[2] only we

[1] *Mutter Erde*, 1905.

[2] *Vide* my *Cults*, v. pp. 345–365.

dare not call her in the earliest, and scarcely at any period, a true personal goddess. Now, there is a further important induction that we may confidently make: at the period when the Aryan conquerors were pushing their way into Aegean lands and the Indo-Iranians into the Punjaub and Mesopotamia, they had a religious bias making for the supremacy of the Father-God and against the supremacy of the goddess. We can detect the same instinct also in the old Germanic pantheon.[1] Its operation is most visible when the Thrako-Phrygian stock, and their cousins the Bithynian, broke into the north of Asia Minor, and the regions on the south of the Black Sea. The god-cult they bring with them clashes with the aboriginal and — as it proved — invincible supremacy of the goddess linked to her divine boy: we hear of such strange cult-products as Attis-Παπαῖος, Father Attis, and one of the old Aryan titles of the High God appears in the Phrygian Zeus Βαγαῖος, Bagha in old Persian and Bog in Slavonic meaning deity. The Aryan hero-ancestor of the Phrygian stock, Manes, whom Sir William Ramsay believes to be identical with the god Men, becomes the father of Atys;[2] also we have later proof of the powerful cult of Zeus the Thunderer, Zeus the Leader of Hosts, in this region of the southern shore of the Black Sea. Another induction that I venture, perhaps incautiously, to make, is that in no Aryan polytheism is there to be found the worship of an isolated or virgin-goddess, keeping apart from relations with the male

[1] The Celtic question is more difficult: Prof. Rhys in his excellent paper on Celtic religion, read as a Presidential address at the Congress of the History of Religions, 1908 (*Transactions*, ii. pp. 201–225), gives the impression that the goddess was more in evidence than the god in old Irish mythology, and doubts whether to attribute this to the non-Indogermanic strain in the population; he notices also certain "matriarchal" phenomena in the religion; cf. *ib.*, p. 242.

[2] Herod., 1, 94; 4, 45 (note here the Thracian associations of Manes).

deity: the goddesses in India, Germany, Ireland, Gaul,[1] Thrace, and Phrygia are usually associated temporarily or permanently with the male divinity, and are popularly regarded as maternal, if not as wedded. Trusting to the guidance of these two inductions, and always conscious of the lacunae in our records, we may draw this important conclusion concerning the earliest religious history of Hellas: namely, that where we find the powerful cult of an isolated goddess, she belongs to the pre-Hellenic population. The axiom applies at once and most forcibly to Artemis and Athena; the one dominant in certain parts of Arcadia and Attica, the other the exclusive deity of the Attic Acropolis. Their virginal character was probably a later idea arising from their isolation, their aversion to cult-partnership with the male deity.[2] The Aryan Hellenes were able to plant their Zeus and Poseidon on the high hill of Athens, but not to overthrow the supremacy of Athena in the central shrine and in the aboriginal soul of the Athenian people. As regards Hera, the question is more difficult: the excavations at the Heraeum have been supposed by Dr. Waldstein to prove the worship of a great goddess on that site, going back in time to the third millennium B.C.,[3] a period anterior to the advent of the god-worshipping Aryan Hellenes. And this goddess remained

[1] The Romanised-Celtic cult of a vague group of "Sanctae Virgines," attested by an inscription found near Lyons (Rhys, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 102), counts very little against this induction.

[2] The warlike character of these Virgin Goddesses, Athena, Ishtar, might be explained on a sociologic hypothesis that would also account for Amazonism; in modern Albania the girl who refuses marriage is allowed to wear man's dress and to bear arms, vide *Journ. Anthrop. Inst.*, 1910, p. 460.

[3] But in a recent paper (*Athenische Mittheilungen*, 1911, p. 27) Frickenhaus and Müller give reasons for dating the earliest Heraeum to the eighth century. At any rate, the goddess-cult in this locality was vastly older.

dominant through all history at Argos and Samos. But we have no reason for supposing that her name was Hera in that earliest period. Phonetically, the word is best explained as "Aryan": if it was originally the name brought by the Hellenes and designating the wife-goddess of the sky-god—and in spite of recent theories that contradict it I still incline to this view—the Hellenes could apply it to the great goddess of the Argolid, unless her aversion to matrimony was a dogma, or her religious isolation a privilege, too strong to infringe. This does not seem to have been the case. The goddess of Samian cult, a twin-institution with the Argive, was no virgin, but united with the sky-god in an old ἱερὸς γάμος. Nevertheless, throughout all history the goddess in Argos, and probably in Samos, is a more powerful cult-figure than the god.

As regards Aphrodite, few students of Greek religion would now assign her to the original Aryan-Hellenic polytheism. Most still regard her as coming to the Greek people from the Semitic area of the Astarte cult. And this was the view that I formerly developed in the second volume of my cults. But at that time we were all ignorant of the facts of Minoan-Mycenaean religion, and some of us were deceived concerning the antiquity of the Phoenician settlements in Cyprus and Hellas. The recently discovered evidence points, I think, inevitably to the theory that Sir Arthur Evans supports; that the goddess of Cyprus, the island where the old Minoan culture lived longest, is one form of the great goddess of that gifted Aegean people, who had developed her into various manifestations through long centuries of undisturbed religious life. Let us finally observe that it is just these names, Artemis, Athena, Aphrodite, that have hitherto defied linguistic

explanation on either Aryan or Semitic phonetic principles. We do not yet know the language of King Minos.

A cursory and dogmatic answer may now be given to the two questions posed above. The Aryan Hellenes did not bring with them the supremacy of the goddess, for the idea was not natural to them: they did not borrow it from any Semitic people in the second millennium, for at that time it was not natural to the Semites: they found it on the soil of the Aegean lands, as a native growth of an old Mediterranean religion, a strong plant that may be buried under the deposits of alien creeds, but is always forcing its head up to the light again.

Therefore in tracing goddess-cult from the Euphrates valley to the western Aegean shores, as a test of the influence of the East on the West, we are brought up sharply at this point. The Western world is divided from the Eastern by this very phenomenon that the older scholars used to regard as proving a connection. And it may well have been the Western cult that influenced the western Semites.

CHAPTER VI.

The Deities as Nature-Powers.

So far as we have gone our main question must be still regarded as an open one. We may now compare the particular conceptions concerning divinity that prevailed at the period to which our search is limited, in the valley of the Euphrates, and in the other communities that are in our route of comparison. Many striking points of general similarity will present themselves, upon which we must not lay too much weight for our argument, since all polytheisms possess a certain family likeness: of more importance will be certain strikingly dissimilar features, if we find any.

First, in regard to the general concepts or characters of the divinities, the same formula seems mainly applicable to the Mesopotamian as to the Hellenic facts: the leading divinities have usually some distinct association with the world of nature; but the natural phenomenon or elemental fact that may be there in the background of their personality, becomes overlaid and obscured by the complex ethical and mental traits that are evolved. Therefore the mere nature-fact rarely explains the fully-developed god, either of Babylon or of Hellas. A few salient examples will make this clear. It is only perhaps Shamash the sun-god of Sippar, and Sin the moon-god of Ur, that retain their nature-significance rarely obscured. The hymn to Sin in Dr. Langdon's

collection reveals an intelligible lunar imagery throughout ; but in another published by Zimmern,[1] his personality becomes more spiritual and mystical ; he is at once "the mother-body who bears all life, and the pitiful gracious father," the divinity who has created the land and founded temples; under the Assyrian régime he seems to have become a god of war.[2] Shamash even surpasses him in grandeur and religious value, so far as we can judge from the documents ; but his whole ethical and spiritual character, clearly articulated as it is, can be logically evolved from his solar. But in studying the characters of Marduk and Nergal, for instance, we feel that the physical theories of their origin help us but little, and are at times self-contradictory ; and it might be well for Assyriologists to take note of the confusion and darkness that similar theories have spread in this domain of Hellenic study. Thus we are told that the Sun in the old Sumerian-Babylonian system gave birth to various special personalities, representing various aspects of him : Marduk is the spring-sun, rejoicing in his strength, although his connection with Shamash does not seem specially close ; yet Jeremias, who expresses this opinion,[3] believes also that Marduk is a storm-god, because "his word can shake the sea." Shall we say, then, that Jahwé is a storm-god "because the voice of the Lord shaketh the cedar-trees" ? The phrase is quite innocent if we only mean by it that any and every personal God could send a storm ; it becomes of doubtful value if it signifies here that Marduk is an impersonation of the storm. The texts seem sometimes to contradict each other ; Ninib, for instance,

[1] *Bab. Hym. u. Gebet.*, p. 11.
[2] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 230.
[3] In Roscher's *Lexikon*, ii. 2371 ; cf. *ib.*, 2367.

is regarded by Jeremias [1] as the rising sun, on the ground of certain phrases in his hymn of praise; but the concept of him as a storm-god is more salient in the oldest texts, and thus he is pre-eminently a deity of destruction and death, and becomes specially an Assyrian war-god. Does it help us if we imagine him originally as the Storm-Sun, as Jensen would have us? or is it not allowable to suspect that solar terms of religious description became a later Babylonian convention, and that any deity might attract them? Nergal, again, the god of Kutha, has been supposed to have had a solar origin, as the god of the midday and destructive sun;[2] yet his special realm is Hades, where he ruled by the side of the goddess Allatu, and his name is doubtfully interpreted as the Lord of the Great Habitation, and thus he is regarded as a god of disease and death. This did not hinder him from becoming with Ninib the great war-god of the Assyrians and their god of the chase, nor a pious Babylonian poet from exalting him as "God of the little ones, he of the benevolent visage."[3] In one of the Tel-El-Amarna texts he is designated by an ideogram, that almost certainly means "the god of iron."[4] This last fact, if correct, is an illustration of that which a general survey of the Babylonian texts at last impresses upon us: the physical origin of the deity, if he had one, does not often shape and control his whole career; the high god grows into manifold forms, dilates into a varied spiritual personality, progresses with the life of his people, reflects new aspects of life, altogether independently of any physical idea of him that may have originally prevailed. Adad, the

[1] Roscher, *Lexikon*, iii. p. 364.
[2] Jeremias, *op. cit.*, iii. p. 250.
[3] Langdon, *Sum. Babyl. Psalms*, p. 83.
[4] Roscher, *Lexikon*, p. 252.

god of storms, becomes a god of prophecy, and is addressed as a god of mercy in the fragment of a hymn.[1] Ea the god of waters becomes *par excellence* the god of wisdom, not because waters are wise, but probably because Eridu, the seat of his cult, was an immemorial home of ancient wisdom, that is to say, magic. As for the great Nebo of Borsippa, Jeremias,[2] who is otherwise devoted to solar theories, has some good remarks on the absence of any sign of his nature-origin: his ideogram designates "the prophet," in his earliest character he is the writer, his symbol is the "stilus" of the scribe. Yet he does not confine himself to writing: he is interested in vegetation, and eulogised in one hymn as "he who openeth the springs and causeth the corn to sprout, he without whom the dykes and canals would run dry." Surely this interest comes to him, not from the planet Mercury,[3] but from his wisdom and his concern with Babylonian civilisation, which depended upon dykes and canals. We are presented here with a progressive polytheism, that is, one of which the divinities show the power of self-development parallel with the self-development of the people.

The question we have just been considering, the physical character of the Babylonian deities in relation to their whole personality, suggests two last reflections. Their gods have a certain relation to the planets, which is preserved even in our modern astronomy. That the early Sumerians worshipped stars is probable,[4] as the Sumerian sign for divinity is a star; but that the Sumerian-Babylonian high gods were personal forms of the planets, is denied by leading modern Assyri-

[1] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 484.
[2] Roscher, *Lexikon*, iii., *s.v.* "Nebo."
[3] As Jeremias supposes, Roscher, *op. cit.*, iii. p. 60.
[4] *Vide* Tiele, *Histoire des anc. relig.*, p. 242.

ologists,[1] except in the case of the sun and the moon, Shamash and Sin. It was only the Chaldaean astronomic theory that came to regard the various planets in their varying positions as special manifestations of the powers of the different personal gods; and the same planet might be a manifestation, according to its different positions, of different gods: the "star Jupiter at one point is Marduk, at another point Nebo"; this dogma is found on a seventh-century tablet, which declares at the same time that "Mercury" is Nebo.[2] This planetary association of the deities is well illustrated by the memorial relief of Asarhaddon found at Sinjerli, and the relief of Maltaija, showing stars crowning their heads;[3] but both these are later than the period with which we are here immediately concerned.

Lastly, we fail to observe in that domain of the old Babylonian religion which may be called nature-worship, any clear worship of the earth regarded as a personal and living being, as the Hellenes regarded Gaia. The great goddesses, Ishtar, the goddess at once warlike and luxurious, virgin and yet unchaste, terrible and merciful, the bright virgin of the sky, Bau, the wife of Ninib, the "amorous lady of heaven," are certainly not of this character. Still less is Allalu, the monstrous and grim Queen of Hell, at whose breast the lions are suckled. It seems that if the early Sumerians conceived the earth as a personal divinity at all, they imagined it as a male divinity. For in the inscriptions of Nippur, Enlil or Bel appears as a Lord of the under-

[1] *Vide* Winckler, *Himmels und Weltenbild der Babylonier*, pp. 10–11. Jeremias, Roscher, *Lexikon*, iii. p. 58. But Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 84, seems to believe in the planetary origin of Ishtar, and would explain her character as the planet Venus.

[2] Winckler, *ib.*, p. 11.

[3] Roscher, *Lexikon*, iii. pp. 66–67.

world, meaning our earth as distinct from the heavens: he is hymned as the "lord of the harvest-lands, lord of the grain-fields" [1]—he is the "husbandman who tends the fields"; when Enlil is angry, "he sends hunger everywhere." In another hymn he is thus described: "The great Earth-Mountain is Enlil, the mountain-storm is he, whose shoulders rival the heavens, whose foundation is the bright abyss"; [2] and again, "Lord, who makest to abound pure oil and nourishing milk; . . . in the earth Lord of life art thou"; "to give life to the ground thou dost exist." [3] It is evident that Enlil is more than the personal earth regarded as a solid substance; he is rather the god of all the forces and life that move on and in the earth, hence he is "the lord of winds." [4] He is more, then, than the mere equivalent of Gaia. One might have expected to find a Sumerian counterpart for this goddess in Ninlil or Belit, the wife and female double of Enlil or Bel: but in an inscription that is dated as early as 4000 B.C. she is styled "The Queen of Heaven and Earth," [5] and though in a hymn of lamentation addressed to her [6] she is described as the goddess "who causeth plants to come forth," yet the ecstatic and mysticising Babylonian imagination has veiled and clouded her nature-aspect.

This strange religious poetry which had been fermenting for thousands of years, was likely enough to transform past recognition the simple aboriginal fact. It is only the lesser deities, the "Sondergötter" of the Sumerian pantheon, whose nature-functions might remain clear and unchanged: for instance, such a corn-deity as we see on a cylinder, with corn-ears in

[1] Langdon, *Hymn* xiii. p. 199.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 221.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 277.
[4] *Ib.*, p. 223.
[5] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 55.
[6] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

his hand and corn-stalks springing from his shoulders.[1] Even the simple form of Tammuz, the darling of the Sumerian people, has been somewhat blurred by the poetry of passion that for long ages was woven about him. As Zimmern has shown in a recent treatise,[2] he was never the chief deity of any Babylonian or Assyrian state, but nevertheless one of great antiquity and power with the Sumerian people, and his cult and story were doubtless spreading westward in the second millennium. In spite of all accretions and the obscurity of his name, which is interpreted to mean "real son of the water-deep," [3] we can still recognise the form of the young god of vegetation who dies in the heat of the summer solstice and descends to the world below, leaving the earth barren till he returns. This idea is expressed by some of his names, "the Lord of the land's fruitfulness, the Lord of the shepherd's dwelling, the Lord of the cattle-stall, the God of grain," [4] and by many an allusion to his legend in the hymns, which are the most beautiful and pathetic in the old Sumerian psalmody: "in his manhood in the submerged grain he lay"; "how long still shall the verdure be imprisoned, how long shall the green things be held in bondage?" [5] An interesting title found in some of the incantation liturgies is that of "the shepherd," and like some other vegetation-powers he is at times regarded as the Healer. Though he was not admitted

[1] Pinches, *Babylonian and Assyrian Religions*, p. 104; cf. "Nidaba," Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 95, a goddess of agriculture.

[2] "Der Babylonische Gott Tamuz," in *Abh. König. Sächs. Gesell. Wiss.*, xxvii. (1909).

[3] Zimmern regards Dumuzi or Damuzi as shortened from Dumuzi-Abzu, but Jastrow (*op. cit.*, p. 90) would keep the two names distinct, and interprets Dumuzi simply as "Son of Life."

[4] *Vide* Zimmern in *Sitzungsb. König. Sächs. Gesell. Wiss.*, 1907.

[5] Zimmern, *ib.*, p. 208; cf. Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

as the compeer of the high gods into the Babylonian or Assyrian pantheon, he may be said to have survived them all, and his name and myth became the inspiration of a great popular religion. No other of that vast fraternity of corn-spirits or vegetation-spirits into which Dr. Frazer has initiated us, has ever had such a career as Tammuz. In one of his hymns he is invoked as "Lord of the world of Death," because for a time he descended into Hell.[1] If this idea had been allowed to germinate and to develop its full potentiality, it might have changed the aspect of Babylonian eschatology. But, as we shall see, the ideas naturally attaching to vegetation, to the kindly and fair life of seeds and plants, were never in Babylonia properly harmonised with those that dominated belief concerning the lower world of the dead. The study of the Tammuz-rites I shall reserve for a later occasion.

We have now to consider the other Anatolian cults from the point of view of nature-worship. The survey need not detain us long as our evidence is less copious. As regards the western Semites, our trustworthy records are in no way so ancient as those that enlighten us concerning Mesopotamia. Philo of Byblos, the interpreter of the Phoenician Sanchuniathon, presents us only with a late picture of the Canaanite religion, that may be marred by their own symbolic interpretations. Because we are told[2] that "the Phoenicians and Egyptians were the first to worship the sun and the moon and the stars,"[2] or "the first to deify the growths of the earth,"[3] we cannot conclude that in the second millennium the religion of the Phoenicians was purely solar or astral, or merely the cult of vegetation-gods.

[1] Zimmern, *Sitzungsb. König. Sächs. Gesell. Wiss.*, p. 220.
[2] Eus., *Praep. Ev.*, 1, 9, 29. [3] *Ib.*, 1, 10, 6.

"Baalshamin" means the lord of the heavens, an Aramaic and Phoenician god, and Sanchuniathon explained him as the sun;[1] but Robertson Smith gives good reason for the view that the earliest conception of the local Baal was of a deity of the fertilising spring, a local divine owner of a well-watered plot, hence the giver of all life to fruits and cattle.[2] Nor are we sure what was the leading "nature-aspect" of the cult of Astarte. The title "Meleket Ashamaim," "the Queen of the Heavens," which Ezekiel attaches to her, does not inform us precisely concerning her earliest and original character. From her close association with the Minoan goddess of Cyprus, she was no doubt worshipped as the source of the life of plants and animals and men. Also, it is of some value to bear in mind the later records concerning the worship of Helios at Tyre in the Roman Imperial period, and of Helios and the thunder-god at Palmyra, where Adad-Rimmon, the storm-god who was in power among the western Semites in the earliest period, may have survived till the beginning of Christianity. We may conclude from all this that in the oldest period of the western Semite societies the cult of special nature-deities was a prominent feature of the religion. But even these may already in the second millennium have acquired a complex of personal attributes ethical and spiritual. In the later Carthaginian religion, the personal deities are clearly distinguished from the mere nature-powers, such as the sun, earth, and moon; and this important distinction may have arisen long before the date of the document that proves it.[3]

[1] Eus., *Praep. Ev.*, 1, 10, 7. [2] *Rel. of Sem.*, pp. 96–100.
[3] Polyb., 7, 9 (the Carthaginian oath of alliance with Philip of Macedon).

Of the Hittite gods we may say this much at least, that the monuments enable us to recognise the thunder-god with the hammer or axe, and in the striking relief at Ibreez we discern the form of the god of vegetation and crops, holding corn and grapes. The winged disk, carved with other doubtful fetich-emblems above the head of the god who is clasping the priest or king on the Boghaz-Keui relief, is a solar emblem, borrowed probably from Egyptian religious art. And the Hittite sun-god was invoked in the Hittite treaty with Rameses II.[1] Whether the mother-goddess was conceived as the personal form of Gaia is doubtful; her clear affinity with Kybele would suggest this, and in the Hittite treaty with Rameses II. mentioned above, the goddess Tesker is called the Mistress of the Mountains, the express title of the Phrygian Mother, and another "the Mistress of the Soil."[2] Yet evidently the Hittite religion is too complex to be regarded as mere nature-worship: the great relief of Boghaz-Keui shows a solemn and elaborate ritual to which doubtless some spiritual concepts were attached.

As regards the original ideas underlying the cults of those other Anatolian peoples who were nearer in geographical position and perhaps in race to the Aegean peoples, we have no explicit ancient records that help us to decide for the second millennium. For some of these various communities the goddess was, as we have seen, the supreme power. The great Phrygian goddess Kybele is the cult-figure of most importance for our purpose, and it is possible to divine her original character with fair certainty.[3] In her attributes, functions, and form, we can discern nothing celestial,

[1] Garstang, *op. cit.*; p. 348.
[2] *Vide supra*, p. 88.
[3] *Vide* my *Cults*, vol. iii. pp. 295–300.

solar or lunar; she was, and remained to the end, a mother-goddess of the earth, a personal source of and life of fruits, beasts, and man: her favourite haunt was the mountains, and her earliest image that we know, that which the Greeks called Niobe on Mount Sipylos, seems like a human shape emerging from the mountain-side: she loved also the mountain caverns, which were called after her κύβελα; and according to one legend she emerged from the rock Agdos, and hence took the name Agdestis. The myth of her beloved Attis is clear ritual-legend associated with vegetation; and Greek poetry and Greek cult definitely linked her with the Greek Gaia. We gather also from the legend of Attis and other facts that her power descended to the underworld, and the spirits of the dead were gathered to her;[1] hence the snake appears as her symbol, carved as an akroterion above her sepulchral shrine, where she is sculptured with her two lions at Arslan Kaya—"the Lion Rock in Phrygia";[2] and her counterpart, the Lydian Mother Hipta, is addressed as χθονίη.[3]

In all her aspect and functions she is the double of the great Minoan mother-goddess described already, whose familiar animals are the lion and the serpent, who claims worship from the mountain-top, and whose character is wholly that of a great earth goddess with power doubtless reaching down to the lower world of the dead. Only from Crete we have evidence which is lacking in pre-Aryan Phrygia of the presence of a thunder or sky-god by her side.[4]

[1] *Vide* Ramsay, *Hell. Journ.*, v. p. 261; my *Cults*, iii. p. 299.
[2] Ramsay, *ib.*, p. 242.
[3] *Cults*, vol. v. p. 296 (Dionysos, R. 63d).
[4] The axe, the thunder-fetish, is attached to her at times, either because it was the prevalent religious symbol in Crete or because of her union with the Thunder-God.

Turning our attention now to the early Hellenic world, and to that part of its religion which we may call Nature-worship, we discern certain general traits that place it on the same plane in some respects with the Mesopotamian. Certain of the higher deities show their power in certain elemental spheres, Poseidon mainly in the water, Demeter in the land, Zeus in the air. But of none of these is the power wholly limited to that element : and each has acquired, like the high gods of Assyria and Babylon and Jahwé of Israel, a complex anthropomorphic character that cannot be derived, though the old generation of scholars wearily attempted to derive it, from the elemental nature-phenomenon. Again, other leading divinities, such as Apollo, Artemis, Athena, are already in the pre-Homeric period, as far as we can discern, pure real personalities like Nebo and Asshur, having no discoverable nature-significance at all. Besides these higher cults, we discern a vast number of popular local cults of winds, springs, rivers, at first animistically and then anthropomorphically imagined. So in Mesopotamia we find direct worship of canals and the river. Finally, we discern in early Hellas a multitude of special " functional " divinities or heroes, " Sondergötter," like Eunostos, the hero of the harvest : and it may be possible to find their counterparts in the valley of the Euphrates.[1] We have also the nameless groups of divine potencies in Hellas, such as the Πραξιδίκαι, Μειλίχιοι, these being more frequent in the Hellenic than in the Mesopotamian religion, which presents such parallels as the Annunaki and the Igigi, nameless daimones of the lower and upper world : and

[1] *E.g.* the " Tile-God," the lord of foundations and tiles, mentioned in the inscription of Nabonid in *Keilinschr. Bibl.*, iii. p. 101 ; but cf. Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 176, who regards him as a special form of Ea.

these in both regions may be regarded as products of animism not yet developed into theism.

But such general traits of resemblance in two developed polytheisms deceive no trained inquirer; and it would be childish to base a theory of borrowing on them. What is far more important are the marked differences in the nature-side of the Greek polytheism, as compared with the Sumerian-Babylonian. In the latter, the solar-element was very strong, though perhaps not so omnipresent as some Assyriologists assure us. On the contrary, in the proto-Hellenic system it was strikingly weak, so far as we can interpret the evidence. The earliest Hellenes certainly regarded the Sun as a personal animate being, though the word Helios did not necessarily connote for them an anthropomorphic god. But the insignificance of his figure in the Homeric poems agrees well with the facts of actual cult. As I have pointed out in the last volume of my *Cults*,[1] it was only at Rhodes that Helios was a great personal god, appealing to the faith and affections of the people, revered as their ancestor and the author of their civilisation, and descending, we may believe, from the period of the Minoan culture [2] with which Rhodes was closely associated in legend. And it appears from the evidence of legend and Minoan art that sun-worship was of some power in the pre-Hellenic Aegean civilisation. In the Mycenaean epoch he may have had power in Corinth, but his cult faded there in the historic age before that of Athena and Poseidon. The developed Hellene preferred the more personal

[1] Vol. v. 417–420.

[2] For Sun-worship indicated by Minoan monuments *vide* Evans, *Hell. Journ.*, 1901, pp. 172–173; on a stone at Tenos we find a curious inscription, Ἡλιοσαρπήδονος (*Cults*, v. p. 451, R. 37), and Sarpedon is a Minoan-Rhodian figure.

deity, whose name did not so obviously suggest a special phenomenon of nature. And if he inherited or adopted certain solar personages, as some think he adopted a sun-god Ares from Thrace, he seems to have transformed them by some mental process so as to obliterate the traces of the original nature-perception.

Even more significant for our purpose is the comparison of the two regions from the point of view of lunar-cult. We have sufficiently noted already the prominence of the moon-god Sin in the Babylonian pantheon, an august figure of a great religion: and among all the Semitic peoples the moon was a male personality, as it appears to have been for the Vedic Indians and other Aryan peoples. The Hellenic imagination here presents to us this salient difference, that the personal moon is feminine, and she seems to have enjoyed the scantiest cult of all the great powers of Nature. Not that anywhere in Greece she was wholly without worship.[1] She is mentioned in a vague record as one of the divinities to whom νηφάλια, "wineless offerings," were consecrated in Athens: she had an ancient place in the aboriginal religion of Arcadia; of her worship in other places the records are usually late and insignificant. The great Minoan goddess may have attracted to herself some lunar significance, but this aspect of her was not pronounced.

Here, then, is another point at which the theory of early Babylonian influence in nascent Hellenic religion seriously breaks down. And in this comparison of Nature-cults it breaks down markedly at two others. The pantheon of Mesopotamia had early taken on an astral-character. The primitive Hellenes doubtless had, like other peoples, their star-myths; and their

[1] Vide *Cults*, v. pp. 450–453, for references.

superstitions were aroused and superstitious practices evoked by celestial "teratology," by striking phenomena, such as eclipses, comets, falling stars.[1] But there is no record suggesting that they paid direct worship to the stars, or that their deities were astral personations, or were in the early period associated with the stars: such association, where it arose, is merely a sign of that wave of Oriental influence that moved westward in the later centuries. The only clear evidences of star-cult in Hellenic communities that I have been able to find do not disturb this induction: Lykophron and a late Byzantine author indicate a cult of Zeus Ἀστέριος in Crete, which cannot, even if real, be interpreted as direct star-worship: [2] at Sinope, a city of Assyrian origin, named after the Babylonian moon-god, a stone with a late inscription suggests a cult of Seirios and the constellations; [3] and an Attic inscription of the Roman Imperial epoch, mentions a priest of the φωσφόροι, whom we must interpret as stellar beings.[4] What, then, must we say about the Dioskouroi, whom we are generally taught to regard as the personal forms of the morning- and the evening-star? Certainly, if the astral character of the great Twin-Brethren of the Hellenes were provedly their original one, the general statement just put forth would have to be seriously modified. But a careful study of their cult does not justify the conventional view; and the theory that Wide has insisted on [5] appears to me the only reasonable account

[1] *E.g.* Plutarch, *Vit. Agid.*, c. 11 (the Spartan ephors every nine years watch the sky, and if a star falls take it for a sign of some religious offence of one of the kings, who is suspended until the Delphic oracle determines about him).

[2] *Cults*, vol. i., "Zeus," R. 30.

[3] *Ib.*, vol. v. p. 452, R. 41.

[4] *Ib.*, p. 450, R. 24.

[5] *Lakonische Kulte*, p. 316.

of them, namely, that originally they were heroic "chthonian" figures, to whom a celestial character came later to be attached: it is significant that the astral aspect of them is only presented in comparatively late documents and monuments, not in Homer or the Homeric hymn, and that their most ancient ritual includes a "lectisternium," which properly belonged to heroes and personages of the lower world.

Lastly, the nature-worship of the Hellenes was pre-eminently concerned with Mother-earth—with Ge-meter, and this divine power in its varied personal forms was perhaps of all others the nearest and dearest to the popular heart: so much of their ritual was concerned directly with her. And some scholars have supposed, erroneously, I think, but not unnaturally, that all the leading Hellenic goddesses arose from this aboriginal animistic idea. We may at least believe this of Demeter and Kore, the most winning personalities of the higher Hellenic religion. And even Athena and Artemis, whatever, if any, was their original nature-significance, show in many of their aspects and much of their ritual a close affinity to the earth-goddess. But, as I have indicated above, it is impossible to find in the early Mesopotamian religion a parallel figure to Ge: though Ishtar was naturally possessed of vegetative functions—so that, when she disappears below the world, all vegetation languishes—yet it would be hazardous to say that she was a personal form of earth: we may rather suspect that by the time the Semites brought her to Mesopotamia from the West, she had lost all direct nature-significance, and was wholly a personal individual.

Finally, the cleavage between the two groups of peoples in their attitude towards the powers of nature is still further marked in the evolution of certain moral and

eschatologic ideas. The concept of a Ge-Themis, of Earth as the source of righteousness, and of Mother-earth as the kindly welcomer of the souls of the dead, appears to have been alien to Mesopotamian imagination, for which, Allatu, the Queen of the lower world, is a figure wholly terrible.

CHAPTER VII.

The Deities as Social-Powers.

The next important section of our survey is the comparison of the social and ethical aspects of the religions in the eastern and western areas. Here again the former warning may be repeated, not to draw rash conclusions from the observance of mere general points of similarity, such as occur in the religious systems of all the more advanced societies of which we have any explicit record.

The idea that religion is merely a concern of the private individual conscience is one of the latest phenomena in all religious history. Both for the primitive and the more cultured communities of ancient history, religion was by a law of its nature a social phenomenon, a force penetrating all the institutions of the political life, law and morality. But its precise contribution to the evolution of certain social products in the various communities is still a question inviting and repaying much research. It will be interesting to compare what may be gleaned from Assyriology and the study of Hellenism bearing on this inquiry, although it may not help us much towards the solution of our main question.

We may assume of the Mesopotamian as of other peoples, that its "social origins" were partly religious; only in the valley of the Euphrates, society had already

so far advanced in the fifth millennium B.C. that the study of its origins will be always problematic. The deities are already national, having developed far beyond the narrow tribal limits before we begin to discern them clearly; we have not to deal with the divinities of clans, phratries, or septs, but of complex aggregates, such as cities and kingdoms. And the great cities are already there before our knowledge begins.

In the Sumerian myth of creation, it is the high god himself who, after settling the order of heaven and earth, immediately constructs cities such as Borsippa; a passage in Berosus speaks of Oannes, that is to say, Ea as the founder of cities and temples;[1] and the myths may enshrine the truth that the origin of the Mesopotamian city was often religious, that the temple was its nucleus. I cannot discover that this is indicated by the names of any other of the great cities, Babylon, Borsippa, Sippar, Kutha; but it is shown by the name of Nineveh and its connection with the Sumerian goddess Nin or Nina, possibly a form of Ishtar.[2] And in the inscription of Sargon giving the names of the eight doors of his palace, all named after deities, Ninib is described as the god "who lays the ground-stone of the city for eternity";[3] also we find designations of particular cities, as the city of such-and-such a deity.[4] Finally, it may be worth noting in this direction that Nusku the fire-god, who lights the sacrifices, is called "the City-Founder, the Restorer of Temples."[5]

The evidence of Anatolia is late, but it tells the same story: Sir William Ramsay has emphasised the

[1] Müller, *Frag. Hist. Gr.*, ii. 497.
[2] *Vide* Pinches, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
[3] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 246.
[4] *Id.*, p. 146.
[5] *Id.*, p. 297.

importance for early political history of such names as Hieroupolis, the City of the Temple, developing into Hierapolis, the Holy City.[1] In Hellas the evidence is fuller and older of the religious origin of some, at least, of the *πόλεις*, for some of the old names reveal the personal name or the appellative of the divinity. Such are Athenai (the settlements of Athena); Potniai, "the place of the revered ones"; Alalkomenai, "the places of Athena Alalkomene; Nemea, "the sacred groves of Zeus"; Megara, probably "the shrines of the goddess of the lower world"; Diades, Olympia and others. The reason of such development is not hard to seek: the temple would be the meeting-place of many consanguineous tribes, and its sanctuary would safeguard intertribal markets, and at the same time demand fortification and attract a settlement. Mecca, the holy city of Arabia in days long before and after Islam, had doubtless this origin.[2] We have traces of the same phenomenon in our English names: Preston, for instance, showing the growth of a city out of a monastery. In the later history of Hellenism the religious origin of the *πόλεις* is still more frequently revealed by its name: the god who leads the colonists to their new home gives his name to the settlement; hence the very numerous "Apolloniai."

But though it is not permissible to dogmatise about the origin of the great cities in the valley of the Euphrates, we have ample material supplied by Babylonian-Assyrian monuments and texts of the close interdependence of Church and State, to illustrate what I remarked upon in my inaugural lecture, the political character of the pantheon. This emerges most clearly when we consider

[1] *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*, p. 681.
[2] *Vide* Margoliouth, *Life of Mahomet*, pp. 7, 8.

the relations of the monarch to the deity. Of all Oriental autocracies, it may be said with truth that the instinctive bias of the people to an autocratic system is a religious instinct: the kingship is of the divine type of which Dr. Frazer has collected the amplest evidence. And this was certainly the type of the most ancient kingship that we can discover in the Mesopotamian region. The ancient kings of the Isin dynasty dared to speak of themselves as "the beloved consort of Nana."[1] But more usually the king was regarded as the son or fosterling of the divinity, though this dogma need not have been given a literal interpretation, nor did it clash with the well-established proof of a secular paternity. An interesting example is the inscription of Samsuilina, the son of Hammurabi, who was reigning perhaps as early as the latter part of the third millennium:[2] the king proclaims, "I built the wall in Nippur in honour of the goddess Nin, the walls of Padda to Adad my helper, the wall of Lagab to Sin the god, my begetter." The tie of the foster-child was as close as that of actual sonship; and Assurbanipal is regarded as the foster-child of the goddess of Nineveh. Nebo himself says to him in that remarkable conversation between the god and the king that an inscription has preserved,[3] "weak wast thou, O Assurbanipal, when thou sattest on the lap of the divine Queen of Nineveh, and didst drink from her four breasts." Similarly, the early King Lugalzaggisi declares that he was nourished by the milk of the goddess Ninharsag, and King Gudea mentions Nina as his mother.[4] In an oracle of encouragement

[1] *Keilinschr. Bibl.*, iii. 1, p. 87.

[2] King, *Hammurabi*, pl. 191, no. 97, col. ii.; Jeremias, in Roscher, *Lexikon*, iv. p. 29, *s.v.* "Ramman."

[3] Jeremias, *s.v.* "Nebo," in Roscher, *op. cit.*, iii. p. 62.

[4] Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 379.

given by the goddess Belit to Assurbanipal, she speaks to him thus, "Thou whom Belit has borne, do not fear."[1]

Now a few isolated texts might be quoted to suggest that this idea of divine parentage was not confined to the kings, but that even the private Babylonian might at times rise to the conception that he was in a sense the child of God. At least in one incantation, in which Marduk is commissioned by Ea to heal a sick man, the man is called "the child of his god";[2] and Ishtar is often designated "the Mother of Gods and men" and the source of all life on the earth, human, animal, and vegetative.[3] But the incantation points only to a vague spiritual belief that might be associated with a general idea that all life is originally divine. We may be sure that the feeling of the divine life of the king was a much more real and living belief than was any sense that the individual might occasionally cherish of his own celestial origin. The king and the god were together the joint source of law and order. The greatest of the early Babylonian dynasts, Lugalzaggisi, whose reign is dated near to 4000 B.C., styles himself the vicegerent (Patesi) of Enlil, the earth-god of Nippur;[4] and in early Babylonian contracts, oath was taken in the names both of the god and the king.[5] Hammurabi converses with Shamash and receives the great code from his hands, even as Moses received the law from Jahwé or Minos from Zeus. Did any monument ever express so profoundly the divine origin of the royal authority and the State institutions as the famous

[1] Schiel in *Rev. de l'histoire des religions*, 1897, p. 207.

[2] Jeremias, *Bab. Assyr. Vorstellungen von dem Leben nach dem Tode*, p. 91.

[3] Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 430.

[4] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 34.

[5] Johns, *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws*, etc., p. 27.

Shamash relief ?[1] It is the gods who endow Hammurabi with his various mental qualities : he himself tells us so in his code, " Marduk sent me to rule men and to proclaim Righteousness to the world " ;[2] and he speaks similarly of the sun-god Shamash : " At the command of Shamash, the great Judge of Heaven and Earth, shall Righteousness arise up in the land." [3] He proclaims himself, therefore, the political prophet of the Lord ; and curses with a portentous curse any one who shall venture to abolish his enactments. The later Assyrian kings have the same religious confidence : Sargon (B.C. 722–705) proclaims that he owes his penetrating genius to Ea, " the Lord of Wisdom," and his understanding to the " Queen of the crown of heaven." [4] We find them also, the Assyrian kings, consulting the sun-god by presenting to him tablets inscribed with questions as to their chances of success in a war, or the fitness and loyalty of a minister whom they proposed to appoint.[5]

And this religion affords a unique illustration of the intimacy of the bond between the king as head of the State and the divine powers. The gods are the rulers of destiny : and in the Hall of Assembly at Esagila each year the Council of the Gods under the presidency of Nebo fixed the destiny of the king and the Empire for the ensuing year.[6] This award must have signified the writing down of oracles concerning the immediate future, and no doubt the questions were prepared by the king and the priests. The good king

[1] Reproduced on title-page of Winckler, *Die Gesetze Hammurabi.*
[2] Winckler, *op. cit.*, p. 10.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 39.
[4] *Keilinschr. Bibl.*, ii. p. 47.
[5] *Vide* Knudtzon, *Assyrische Gebete an den Sonnengott*, p. 241.
[6] *Vide* Langdon, *Expositor*, 1909, p. 149 ; cf. Jeremias, *s.v.* " Nebo," Roscher, *op. cit.*, iii. p. 55.

who was devoted to the service of the gods was glorified by the priesthood in much the same terms as are applied in the Old Testament to the king who was devoted to the service of Jahwé: in the cult-inscription of Sippar in the British Museum,[1] Nabupaladdin, who reigned 884–860 B.C., and who re-established the cult of Shamash, is praised by the priest as "the called of Marduk, the darling of Anu and Ea, the man wholly after the heart of Zarpanit."

The king, then, is the head of the church, himself a high-priest, as Gudea was high-priest of Ningirsu, and as the Assyrian kings described themselves as the priests of Asshur, the professional priesthood serving as their expert advisers and ministers. Was he actually worshipped in his life? This is maintained by some Assyriologists, and certain evidence points to the practice. In the conversation between Nebo and Assurbanipal, to which reference has been made, the god promises to the king, "I will raise up thy head and erect thy form in the temple of Bit-Mashmash"; [2] the names of old Babylonian kings are marked with the ideogram of divinity, and Professor Jastrow [3] mentions an inscription of the fourth millennium B.C. in which Gudea ordains sacrifices to his own statues. A document is quoted by Mr. Johns,[4] recording the dedication of a piece of land by a private citizen "for his life," that is to say, to bring a blessing on himself, to the King Lugalla who is called a god, and to his consort. But Zimmern [5] considers that the direct deification of kings was a practice of the earliest period only, and was never pushed so far as it was in Egypt.

[1] Jeremias, *Die Cultus-tafel von Sippar*.
[2] See Jeremias, Roscher, *Lexikon*, iii. pp. 62–63. [3] *Op. cit.*, p. 170.
[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 223. [5] *K.A.T.*[3], pp. 639–640.

There is reason to suppose that the king or patesi who controlled Nippur had alone the right to be deified, Nippur being the original centre of the Sumerian religion.[1]

The sacred character of the king implied that he could exercise miraculous functions or put forth divine "mana" on behalf of his people. We find him in the earlier period reciting incantations in the dark of the moon to avert evil from the land.[2] One of the kings of the dynasty of Ur assumed the title "the exorciser of the holy tree of Eridu," which may point to certain magic functions performed by the king on the sacred tree.[3]

This political aspect of religion appears pronounced also in other early communities of the Semitic race; the high god or goddess is the head of the State; the people of Moab are the sons and daughters of Chemosh; the goddess of Askalon and Sidon wears the mural crown. And doubtless the early Semitic kingship was of the same sacred character elsewhere as in Mesopotamia. The King of Moab on the Mesha Stone calls himself the son of Chemosh; and Ben-Hadad, King of Damascus, is the son of Hadad.[4] In the Aramaic inscription found at Sinjerli,[5] the gods Hadad, El-Reschef, and Shamash are regarded as special protectors of the kings. One of the last kings of Sidon, Tabnit, in the inscription on his sarcophagus, places his priestly office before his royal title, "I, Tabnit, priest of Astarte, King of the Sidonians."[6] King of Byblos or Gobal, in

[1] *Vide* Hilprecht in *Babyl. Exped. Univ. Pennsylv.*, vol. v. series D, pp. 24–29.

[2] *Vide* Langdon, *Transactions of Congress of History of Religions*, vol. i. p. 251.

[3] *Keilinschr. Bibl.*, iii. 1, p. 97.

[4] *Vide* Frazer's paragraph on the divine character of Semitic kings in *Adonis, Attis, Osiris*[2], pp. 12–13.

[5] Lagrange, *Études sur les religions sémitiques*, p. 492.

[6] *Op. cit.*, p. 481.

the fifth century B.C., regards himself as called to his high office by the Baalat, the goddess of the State, and prays that she may bless him and give him length of days "because he is a just king": [1] and mention has already been made of Phoenician monuments showing the King of Sidon seated with Astarte and embraced by her. The claim to actual godship may have really been made by the King of Tyre, as the prophet Ezekiel twice reproaches him with the blasphemy: "Thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the Seat of God, in the midst of the Seas." [2]

The Hittite monuments and the text of the Hittite treaty with Rameses II. reveal a religion of the same political type. The gods are not only witnesses to the political contract, but the great Hittite god of heaven puts his own seal to it; and the last few lines of the text contain a careful description of that seal, which reveals the sacrosanct character of the Hittite kingship; for the design chosen was a group of the god and the Hittite king whom he is embracing. The same significance belongs to certain scenes in the great relief of Boghaz-Keui: on one of the slabs we discern an armed god with his arm round the neck and his hand grasping the hand of a smaller figure, whose emblem and dress suggest a sacerdotal rather than a royal personality. But the happy coincidence of the description in the Hittite-Egyptian treaty proves that this is no mere priest, but a Hittite King [3] of sacred function and semi-

[1] *C. I. Sem.* I, I, I (cf. "Die Phoenizischen Imschriften," by Freiherr von Landau, in *Der Alte Orient*, 1907, p. 13).

[2] Ezek. xxix. 2, 9; quoted by Frazer, *supra*.

[3] The same figure which I interpret as the priest-king occurs in other religious scenes of Hittite sculpture; the type might often have been used for the priest pure and simple, as Dr. Frazer would always interpret it (*vide op. cit.*, pp. 103–108).

divine character in affectionate union with his god; it suggests also a date not far from the thirteenth century for the Boghaz-Keui relief; and it makes unnecessary and improbable the mystic explanation of this scene that Dr. Frazer has ventured.[1] At this early period of the Hittite empire, the kingship may not yet have been detached from the priesthood; even later at Comana, in the same country of Cappadocia, the priests and the kings were drawn from the same stock.[2] One more detail bearing perhaps on the present subject may be noted in this monument at Boghaz-Keui: the goddess wears a crenelated cap, that reminds us somewhat of the later mural or turreted crown borne by Cybele and Astarte. May we suppose that this was the origin of those, and had the same political significance?

Again, it may be noted that in Phrygia itself, the land of the goddess, we have vague evidence in the legend of Midas that the early kings called by that name were regarded as the sons of Kybele.[3]

As regards the Minoan-Mycenaean religion and its relation to the State, the excavations on the site of Knossos suggest that there at least the whole of the state-cult was in the hands of the kings; for no public temples have been found, but only shrines in the palaces. This is the strongest proof of the sacral power of the Minoan ruler, and we can well believe that he was deified after his death; nor need we wholly discredit that vague statement of Tzetzes that the old kings of Crete were given the divine name of Zeus [Δίες].[4]

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 57–58.

[2] Strab., p. 535.

[3] *Vide* Ramsay, *Hell. Journ.*; x. p. 158; cf. Hyginus, 191 (Midas Rex Mydonius filius matris Deae).

[4] *Chil.*, 1, 473; *vide* Cook in *Class. Rev.*, 1903, p. 408.

There is value, then, in Homer's picture of Minos as the friend of God who holds converse with him.

The political significance of Greek religion impresses itself upon us at a thousand points and under endless aspects. The deity belongs not to the individual but to the tribe; and as in the earliest Hellenic period the tribes were conscious of a certain community of blood, their earliest religion appears at many points to have transcended the tribal limits, and certain deities have developed a national character. Now evidence—vague and legendary, it is true, but valuable when compared with the facts of other communities — compels us to conceive of the early Hellenic kings having the same character as those that we have observed in Mesopotamia, Anatolia, and Crete; Homer regards them as the god-born, who can exercise religious functions, whose decrees have the force of θέμις. The fire that burnt on their hearth was sacred and embodied the life of the community; and in the later period the perpetual fire that was maintained in the Prytaneum of the πόλις represented the ancient sacred hearth-fire of the king.[1] Also, when the monarchy was generally abolished, many of the cities felt compelled to retain the title of βασιλεύς for the priest who carried on the religious functions as the shadow of the ancient priest-king. But these similar phenomena are of little ethnographic value. Primitive Hellenism was in these respects only maintaining its own inherited traditions, and following the same lines of early social evolution as those of other communities. On the other hand, the distinctness of developed Hellenism is the secular independence of its intellect; and even in its earliest

[1] *Vide* my *Cults*, v. pp. 350–354; Frazer, *Journ. Philol.*; xiv. "The Prytaneum, Temple of Vesta."

mythic period we can believe that the divine character of the Basileus was less impressively felt, his association with the divinity less intimate, than was the case in Mesopotamia. Neither Agamemnon nor his predecessors would speak, we may be sure, with the same astonishing self-consciousness of their divine inspiration as the earliest and later kings of Babylon and Assyria.

Returning to the Mesopotamian societies, we find much other evidence of the dependence of State-institutions upon cult and religious ideas. Justice and the integrity of the Law were virtues consecrated by old Babylonian religion. One of the most striking of the Shamash hymns exhibits the sun-god as the guardian of right judgment—"the wicked judge thou makest to behold bondage—him who receives not a bribe, who has regard to the weak, shall be well-pleasing to Shamash, he shall prolong his life": "Shamash hates those who falsify boundaries and weights."[1] The respect for the rights of property to which the latter phrase alludes, was maintained by the force of religious sanctions. The King Asurbanipal declares that he has restored to the Babylonians their fields that had been wrongfully taken away, "for fear of Bel and Nebo."[2] A number of inscribed Babylonian boundary-stones have been found with symbols of the various high gods carved upon them, with invocations in their name to deter trespassers, or those who would remove their neighbour's landmark.[3] One of these is marked with a curse as follows:[4] "May Ninib, the Lord of Boundaries, deprive him of

[1] C. D. Gray, *The Samas Religious Texts* (Brit. Mus.), Hymn 1.
[2] *Keilinschr. Bibl.*; ii. p. 131.
[3] Cook, *Religions of Ancient Palestine*, p. 109.
[4] Jeremias, *Hölle u. Paradies*, p. 17.

his son the water-pourer "—meaning that the man who violates the boundaries shall leave no son behind him to perform the funeral rites. Probably other examples of this practice are to be found in non-Hellenic Asia Minor; at present I can only quote one, a late Phrygian inscription, which, however, may testify to an early Phrygian religious function, on a slab with the divine name Ὀροφύλαξ, "Boundary-guardian," inscribed beneath a carved relief-figure of the god Men bearing a club.[1] In Greece, as is well known, religion contributed the same aid to the evolution of the law of private property in land; the boundary is put under the protection of Zeus Ὅριος, a power similar to the Latin Jupiter Terminus, or of Hermes Ἐπιτέρμαιος.[2] In this function they are regarded as nether-deities, whose divinity is latent in the soil. But though Hellas may have borrowed from Babylon its system of land-measurement, it did not need to borrow this religious idea and practice. For these are widespread over the world: in the Teutonic north the rights of the owner were sanctified by carrying holy fire from the hearth round the boundary; and in savage modern societies by the use of the terrible weapon of the tabu and by the erection of fetiches on the boundary mark which serve as ἀποτρόπαια.[3] We have here a salient example of religion as a constructive force in framing a great social institution, while the motive desire is secular and purely human.

But we must not, I think, hope to be able to trace with any exactness the part played by religion in constructing the various departments of the social fabric

[1] Sterrett, *Epigraphical Journey*, No. 65.
[2] Vide *Cults*, vol. v. p. 19.
[3] *Vide* Frazer, *Psyche's Task*, pp. 18–30.

of Babylonia ; for when we get our first glimpse of that society it is already so far advanced, so complex in its civilisation, in a sense so modern, that its embryology is likely to escape us. Nevertheless, it is interesting for our purpose to study the earliest material, the code of Hammurabi, to watch what light it throws on the correlation of religious and secular life.

Some parts of it are missing, but we may be allowed to pass a temporary judgment on that which is preserved, and which appears to be the greater part of the whole corpus.[1] The code, as I have mentioned, is inspired by the god, safeguarded by the god, and the legislation is in that sense theocratic ; but as compared, for instance, with the Jewish books of the Law, it impresses us as the work of a cool-headed lawyer, of secular utilitarian principles, bringing legal acumen to bear on the problems of a complex society. At certain points it is still on the barbaric plane : the principle of " an eye for an eye " is enacted ; the sense of individual responsibility for wrong-doing is not yet so far developed but that vicarious punishment is still allowed ; a man's son or daughter might be put to death for his own offence. But in many respects it reveals an advanced moral and intellectual view, and the religious atmosphere is absent where we should most expect to find an infusion of it. In the enactments dealing with the fees due to a physician, we seem to discern that medicine has become a free and secular science. Still more important for our purpose are the clauses concerning homicide, for it is particularly in regard to homicide that religious feeling has been most operative in the

[1] *Vide* Winckler's " Die Gesetze Hammurabi " in *Der Alte Orient*, 1906 ; an English version of the code in Johns' *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws and Contracts.*

early legislation of society, and the evolution of our modern morality concerning this offence has been at times retarded by religion. Only one clause in the code happens to deal with deliberate murder, and only murder in special circumstances, those in which Clytemnestra murdered Agamemnon: Hammurabi would have impaled Clytemnestra: a few other clauses are concerned with culpable homicide and unintentional. Hammurabi being himself a master-builder, is severe with bad architects who build houses so weakly that they fall in and kill the owners: in such a case he kills the architect. But he is singularly equitable and mild with a man who is drawn into a quarrel in which blows are passed, and who unthinkingly wounds or kills his opponent; if he can take an oath that he acted "without knowledge or without will," he has only to pay the physician if the man is wounded, and half a mina of silver if the man is killed and was of free birth. Here there is no mention of the blood-feud, and Babylonian society seems wholly to have escaped from that dangerous principle of tribal barbarism.[1] Neither is there any hint of the inherent impurity of all bloodshed, whatever is the manner of the shedding; and it seems that this society was no longer in bondage to that religious feeling, to which our modern moral sense concerning murder is in many ways indebted, but which is often obstructive of legal and ethical progress, and which coloured so deeply the early Judaic and Hellenic law of homicide. Further, we note that Hammurabi's code has come to allow the consideration of motives

[1] The son of the slain man could claim compensation for manslaughter. In an Assyrian document a slave-girl is handed over to the son at the grave of the slain man. This is interesting, for it seems to point to some consideration for the feelings of the ghost (*vide* Johns, *op. cit.*, p. 116).

and extenuating circumstances; and in this vital respect it ranks with modern civilised legislation. Between such a society and the proto-Hellenic community, at least in regard to the view of homicide, there was a great gulf fixed.

But for the present let us pursue the code further. Another crime that early society regards with religious horror, and of which religion always takes cognisance, is incest. The enactments of the code deal only with three cases: incest with daughter, mother, and stepmother; in the first, the sinner is driven from the land, probably into perpetual exile; in the second, both parties are burned alive; in the third, he is merely driven from the paternal house. The first two punishments reveal, I think, religious feeling, stronger in the second case than in the first: the sinner pollutes the land, therefore the pollution must be purged by his flight, or when most deadly must be purged away by fire; for execution by burning had often the religious significance of a holocaust. Still it is only by surmise that we detect religious colour in the code at this point: in fact, it emerges clearly only in a few clauses. We note that the code allows of expurgation by oath-taking; so did the early Greeks and our own forefathers, and the practice is not distinctive of any particular people or group. The code allows the ordeal in certain cases, as did the Greek, and as probably every community has done at a certain stage of religious feeling; also civilised Babylon countenanced trials for witchcraft, and enacted a similar water-ordeal to that which prevailed in England till fairly recent times.

One clause is of interest as showing that Hammurabi was not afraid of any opposition from the priesthood if he wished to tax Church property; for he enacts that

the ransom of his captured feudal followers (about whom he is particulurly thoughtful) " shall be paid out of the property of the temple nearest to the place where they were taken prisoners."[1] But the most interesting part of the code from the religious point of view, are the enactments concerning a class of women who are devoted to the service of religion, sisters or wives, as they are here called, of Marduk: but it will be more convenient to consider these later on when the question of ritual is dealt with.

Apart from this great document, I do not know if further evidence is forthcoming of the precise influence of religion on the social system of Babylonia. The two spheres may once have been closely interdependent; but we can see from the earliest legal contracts that law had already freed itself from religion in the main; the judge is a secular authority;[2] the scribe who draws up the contracts is a professional notary, and it is not clear that he had any necessary connection with the temples;[3] we only hear of certain elders who assisted the judge, many of whom were temple officials or members of the guild of Shamash votaries;[4] also, we find trials taking place in the temples, especially the temple of Shamash at Sippara, where the legal judgment was called " the judgment of Shamash in the house of Shamash."[5] Much light has yet to come, no doubt, from Babylon, and new light perhaps from Anatolia, to illuminate the part played by religion in the evolution of society. We would wish to know more concerning the religious side of family institutions, whether, for instance, there was any direct cult of the family hearth to which the Hellenes owed so much. Robertson Smith definitely denies that

[1] *Vide* Johns, *op. cit.*, p. 77.
[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 83.
[3] *Op. cit.*; p. 85.
[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 86.
[5] *Op. cit.*, p. 90.

any of the Semitic races knew of such an institution; and he is very probably right, for it belongs more naturally to the colder climates, where the fixed and carefully placed hearth is a necessary centre of the dwelling-room, than to the hotter, where the inhabitants could be content in winter with a movable brazier. Yet one text at least may be cited to prove, if rightly interpreted, that the hearth could be occasionally deified in a Babylonian liturgy; for in a hymn to Nusku the fire-god, which contains a litany of absolution from sins, we find the phrase, "May the hearth of the house deliver you and absolve you," [1] but the same litany speaks also of the canals as deified. And we may value these two examples of that polydaimonism to which we could find parallels in early Hellas. But this evidence does not point to any established and regulated hearth-worship which might serve as the religious bond of family morality. More than one inscription, however, attests the worship of a family house-god (ilu-biti), to whom it seems a small domestic chapel was consecrated.[2] Similarly, we have in Hellas Zeus Ἑρκεῖος and Ζεὺς Κτήσιος. And the Babylonian ilu-biti is mentioned, in association with a divinity of the street, ila-sûki,—a name which reminds us of Apollo Ἀγυιεύς. Only, these household and street-divinities in Babylon may have been mere "daimones" rather than θεοί; nor is it clear whether these family cults were ancestral, the heritage of a particular clan, or whether they were merely consecrated to the personal protective deity of the householder, or what part they played in the family organisation, for instance, in the

[1] Translated by Scheil in *Rev. de l'hist. des Religions*, 1897, p. 205.

[2] Zimmern in *K.A.T.*[3], p. 455; cf. his *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Babyl. Religion*, ii. p. 147, "for the House-God, the House-Goddess, for the House-daimon thou shalt erect three altars."

marriage-ceremonies, births, and adoptions. So far as I have been able to study them, the Babylonian litanies and hymns seem rarely to reflect the religious side of the family life[1]; they are prompted by the needs of the city and the empire, or by the emotional crises of the individual soul. The legal contracts preserved on the brick tablets throw some light on the forms of the marriage ceremony, which appears to have been performed usually in a registration-office rather than a church. There must surely have been also some religious side to it; but the only evidence, so far as I am aware, is a very curious and doubtful document that has been published by Dr. Pinches, containing details of a religious ceremony which appears to be part of a bridal.[2] I will not quote the quaint and bizarre formulae, as the renderings are said to be highly conjectural: if they prove correct, one may judge that the service belongs to a highly advanced religion; but I cannot adduce any parallel to it from other peoples. As for the ritual or religious feeling connected with adoption or birth, I am not aware that the documents have so far disclosed anything: it is stated vaguely by Peiser, in his sketch of Babylonian society, that adoption at Babylon might be prompted by a religious motive, namely, by the desire of the childless parents to have an heir who might continue the ancestor-worship of the family. But no document is quoted in proof of this; and it is very doubtful if we ought to speak of Babylonian ancestor-worship.[3] We may suspect that the writer has been misled by the

[1] For exceptions, *vide infra*, pp. 213, 217.

[2] *Vide* Johns, *op. cit.*, p. 133; quoting from paper by Dr. Pinches in *Proceedings of the Victoria Institute*, 1892–93, "Notes on some recent Discoveries in the Realm of Assyriology."

[3] Johns, *op. cit.*, p. 154, etc., treats Babylonian adoption wholly as a secular business based on secular feelings.

well-known facts of Vedic, Hellenic, and Roman family cult.

In this, as in other respects, we may feel how advanced, modern and secular, was Babylonian society. No trace has appeared as yet of the tribal or phratric system; the family is the unit of the State, but individualism is much developed.

On the other hand, the function of religion as a constructive force in early Greek society, in the evolution of tribal and intertribal law, is more obvious and transparent, for in this land we are fortunate enough to catch glimpses of civilised society in its making, which are denied to us in Mesopotamia. Hellenic religion penetrated every domain and department of Hellenic life to an even greater degree than did Babylonian religion the society of Babylon. And yet the Greek mind as it develops becomes pronouncedly secular, at least in comparison with the Oriental. The contradiction is only apparent. The Hellene used religion as an instrument for constructing his social order, for utilitarian ends, as a serviceable minister that could rarely, and never for long, establish a tyranny. He even used it to assist and glorify his sports, yet he varied and arranged these according to his pleasure. The detrimental tendency of religion to petrify custom was less marked in his midst than elsewhere; as usual, it often lagged behind in the progress of the race, yet it followed the progress on the whole, and often assisted it.

I cannot here give a detailed account of the social functions of Greek religion; and some of its more interesting phenomena I have tried to analyse in detail in my *Hibbert Lectures* and in various chapters of my *Cults*: one of the most important of the special questions, the social or political influence of the cults of ancestors,

entered into the course that I delivered last year. I will only attempt here a brief indication of the salient facts that will repay special study, confining myself as far as possible to those that belong to the proto-Hellenic period. Our knowledge, of course, of the relation of religion to the social order of life, law, and morality in the second millennium in Greece, is only dim and hypothetical: here and there Homer affords us glimpses; for the rest, we have legends and cult evidence which must be carefully and tactfully used. I have already touched on the religious character of the ancient kingship, and the evidence of the religious origin of some of the Hellenic πόλεις. It is probable that some of the deities had already in the proto-Hellenic period a political character, as deities of the assembly or the "agora." Thus Apollo Ἀγυιεύς, at first a divine leader of the invasion, becomes, when the conquerors settle on the land, at once a divinity of the city; and some scholars would derive his very name from the ἀπέλλα, the political assembly. In order to ensure the settlement and development of law, the debates and judgments in the market-place must be secured from armed disturbance such as frequently threatened the peace of the Icelandic Thing: therefore, in pre-Homeric days the market-place was consecrated as a holy place, and the elders who give judgment "hold in their hands the sceptres of clear-voiced heralds."[1] These words probably refer to the κηρύκειον, the badge of Hermes, the god of the market-place, which as a religious amulet confers inviolability on the bearer. The same fetich-badge, giving security to the herald and ambassador, assisted the development of international law; and the only spiritual sanction of treaties

[1] *Il.*, 18, 505.

and covenants with other communities was a religious one, the force of the oath sworn and the ordeal-ritual which accompanied the conclusion of a treaty or contract. The temple on the borderland of different tribes served as a secure place for intertribal intercourse, commercial and festive, and might become the centre of an Amphictyony, or federal union of tribes. The constitution of the Delphic Amphictyony points back to the proto-Hellenic period. The oracles were beginning in the second millennium to play a political part, as they did with greater effect in the first. For Zeus was already at Dodona, and Apollo, the political god *par excellence*, at Pytho.

Our indications are slight and dim; but the poet of the *Odyssey* seems to be aware that an ὀμφή or oracular deliverance might be used to dethrone a royal dynasty.[1] The dedication of a tithe of the captives taken in war to Apollo was a custom connected with the earliest settlements and migration, for Apollo disposed of his captives by colonising them on some vacant land. The practice appears to have been a very early one, for this is the legend of the pre-Dorian settlement of the Dryopes in the Peloponnese;[2] also there is evidence for the institution in pre-historic Greece of that religious system of colonisation which the Latins called the Ver Sacrum.[3] In fact, the religion of Apollo, especially the common worship of Apollo Πυθαεύς, served more than any other cult as a bond of connection between the independent communities already—I believe—in pre-Homeric days; and to this earliest epoch may belong that interesting ritual of the Hyperborean offerings brought by sacrosanct Hellenic pilgrims down from the north along the primeval routes of the Aryan immigration.[4]

[1] *Od.*, 3, 215.
[2] Vide *Cults*, iv. pp. 201–202.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 202.
[4] *Ib.*, pp. 104–106.

The narrower systems of family and phratry tell the same story of the constructive power of religion. The primitive grouping into septs and phratries and tribal subdivisions, of which the traces are not yet discovered in the civilisation of Babylon, has left its deep imprint on historic Greek society; and religion is intimately interwoven with the domestic and phratric cults, not only in that these are much concerned with worship of heroes and ancestors, but that the high divinities also, Zeus Φράτριος, Athena Φρατρία and Ἀπατουρία, take these institutions under their charge. Hence all adoptions and admissions of new members into the phratry had to be performed at the altar. The marriage ceremony was a religious ritual—in Attica, at least, a religious communion like the Roman Confarreatio,[1] and the mutual duties of parents and children, kinsmen and tribesmen, were consecrated by the early ideas concerning the divine nature.[2]

A festival such as the Ἀπατούρια, instituted to cement a social organisation, and to all appearances of great antiquity, has nothing like it in the Babylonian festival calendar, so far as I am aware; and again, to the many political and social titles of the Hellenic divinities such as Πολιεύς, Ἀγοραῖος, Πάνδημος, Βουλαῖος, it would be hard to find parallels in the cult-terminology of Babylon.

In considering a religion under its social or legal aspects, the laws concerning homicide will often yield telling evidence. There is a whole aeon of development dividing the code of Hammurabi and the Homeric and pre-Homeric theory in this matter. The Babylonian had arrived, as we have seen,[3] in some indefinitely

[1] *Vide* my *Cults*, iii. pp. 80–81.
[2] *Ib.*, pp. 53–55.
[3] *Vide supra*, pp. 129–131.

early period at the conception of murder as a crime against the whole State, at what we may call the advanced secular point of view. In Greece that conception is post-Homeric: the Homeric and pre-Homeric societies were still in the stage of law in which homicide is treated as a private affair of the kinsmen, a matter to be settled by the blood-feud or weregild. Only in certain cases it was a sin, namely, when the slain person was a suppliant or a kinsman. The religious feeling in respect of the first partly arises from the old Aryan Hearth-worship;[1] in respect of the second, it is associated with a primitive tribal horror of shedding kindred blood: and, though the feeling of the religious sanctity of the guest, the suppliant, and the kinsman was strong in Semitic communities, I cannot find any special Babylonian cult that is analogous to that of Zeus Μειλίχιος, or Ἱκέσιος, or Ξένιος. I have traced elsewhere the development in the ninth and eighth centuries of the more civilised legislation concerning homicide in Greece, and I have tried to indicate the precise part played by religion in aiding the evolution:[2] to get to the facts one must specially study the worship of Athena and Apollo. I have connected it with a growing sense of the impurity of bloodshed, which might express itself in a definite religious way, as fear of the ghost or of the offended deity. It is open to us to explain this increased sensitiveness concerning purity as a mark of Oriental influence, which was reaching Greece in the first millennium B.C. But at least we ought not to derive it from Mesopotamia until we find evidence of purifications from bloodshed as a common ritual in Babylonian religion, and the impurity of bloodshed an underlying

[1] *Vide* my *Cults*, v. p. 345.
[2] *Evolution of Religion*, pp. 139–152.

principle of the Babylonian law of murder. But, as we have seen, we discern here only the secular result : the religious force that may have worked towards it is too far removed in the background of the past. Summarily, we must conclude that the political application of Hellenic religion seems wholly a native and independent product of the Hellenic spirit, and reflected the characteristically Hellenic forms of civic life.

CHAPTER VIII.

Religion and Morality.

The comparison must also consider the relation in these various societies between religion and morality, both social and individual. From this point of view, as we are dealing with the second millennium only, it must be a comparison mainly between the Mesopotamian and the Hellenic; for except for a few Hittite letters that reveal little, there is no evidence concerning our races of the west of Asia Minor, since monuments can scarcely be direct witnesses concerning ethics; at least, the Asia Minor monuments are not, and we must await the further discovery and interpretation of Hittite literature. For the proto-Hellenic period also, it may be said, we have no explicit and direct evidence. But we have Homer, whose poems belong to the end of that period and the beginning of the second; and we cannot suppose that the average morality that they represent had all grown up in the century before them, still less that Homer had discovered it as an original teacher. Therefore, cautiously and critically handled, his poems throw some light on the moral facts of the centuries behind them. There is also some evidence to be gleaned from the rich field of Greek mythology and cult; only we must realise that we rarely can determine the date of the rise of an old Hellenic legend or the institution of an old Hellenic cult. The Mesopotamian evidence,

then, is direct and explicit, depending solely on the right interpretation of documents; the Hellenic evidence concerning the earliest period is indirect and often hypothetical.

A careful study of all the sources will allow this induction, that the deities of this period in both societies are on the side of whatever morality is current, inspiring it, protecting it, and avenging the breach of it; we are dealing, in fact, with a religion of personal moral powers. Concerning the Mesopotamian, this is a trite observation to make; the most superficial glance of a few hymns confirms it. Shamash is the great god of justice, the protector of the weak; Enlil "destroyeth the evil-minded"; [1] Ishtar judges the cause according to right—she maintains the right of the oppressed and the downcast; Righteousness and Judgment are the sons of Shamash. Ga-tum-duga, "she who produces good," is an appellative of Bau.[2] And yet this is not the whole account. The destructive and evil character of some of the deities in Mesopotamia occasionally appears in the hymns, and is expressed apparently in certain titles. This might be the case at times when those deities are addressed that were powers of death and the lower world; for instance, Nergal, the lord of destruction; Isum, a little-known deity to whom a phrase is attached that is said to mean "the exalted murderer." [3] And this might be explained by the fact that these powers personified, as it were, the baneful forces of nature, or, as perhaps in the case of Martu, whom Jeremias cites as one of the evil gods, were aliens.[4]

[1] Zimmern, *Babylonische Hymnen und Gebete*, p. 20.

[2] Pinches, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

[3] *Vide* Jeremias, *Bab. Assyr. Vorstellungen vom Leben nach dem Tode*, p. 68.

[4] Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], pp. 433–434.

We find also the name of an obscure deity, "Ira," who was a god of pestilence, and at times identified with Nergal;[1] but that a direct cult was attached to him in this baneful character is not shown. And it is unlikely that any Babylonian deity was worshipped definitely as an evil power: moral speculation could always explain the evil that he appeared to work as a punishment for sin or as righteous vengeance on the enemy; that is to say, the evil element becomes moralised, and the worshipper is always convinced that the god can become good to him. Thus in the same context Nergal is called the "Lord of Destruction," and yet he is "the god of the little ones, he of the beneficent visage."[2] The dark storm-god Adad, before whose wrath the high gods rise up in terror, the pitiless one, can yet be implored as "the merciful among the great gods."[3] This transformation, by which a destructive nature-power could become a benevolent being, follows a law of religious psychology, which expresses itself in the quasi-magical phraseology of prayer. The worshipper wishes to get some good from his deity or some mercy: therefore he calls him good and merciful, feeling that such spell-words constrain the god to be so; and belief will arise from the continual repetition of formulae. Therefore, by the time our record begins, all the deities that the Babylonian and Assyrian worshipped are beneficent on the whole: the Epic of Creation supposes the existence of primeval bad powers, but these had been conquered, and some pardoned, by Marduk. The evil personal agencies that remained active were demons, and these

[1] Zimmern, *op. cit.*, pp. 412, 587.
[2] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 83.
[3] Roscher, *Lexikon*, vi. p. 47, *s.v.* "Ramman."

were not worshipped, but exorcised or averted by the good gods.[1]

And this may serve as a fairly accurate description of the moral character of Greek religion at that stage of development where Homer presents it to us. The high deities are worshipped on the whole as moral beings and as beneficent: that is, as the guardians of the social morality of the period, whatever that was. The usual popular writer does not perceive this, because he is always liable to the error of confusing mythology with worship, and supposing that if the mythology is licentious or immoral, the deity is worshipped in that character. All students of mythology and religion are aware that this is false. We might be able to show that the religious imagination and statement of Homer at times fall below the level of contemporary cult, at times rise above it. At any rate, he is evidently addressing a world of religious-minded people, who impute their own moral ideals to their highest divinities, especially to their high god Zeus. Νέμεσις, the social feeling of indignation which is at the psychic basis of social morality, is the common emotion excited both in gods and men by the same acts; and though much of Greek religion was still not yet penetrated with morality, the higher personal gods were generally regarded as on the side of righteousness. One or two Greek myths, such as that of Prometheus, as Hesiod narrates it, might suggest that the deity was not necessarily conceived as the friend, but sometimes even as the enemy, of man. But Hesiod's narrative does not strike us as primitive or

[1] Certain other minor powers or daimones, such as the corn-deity, the Lord of Watercourses (Shuqamunu), may have remained purely "functional," and have acquired no moral attributes beyond the beneficent exercises of their special function. But the habitual Babylonian tendency is to moralise all the gods and goddesses.

popular; and, at any rate, such a view is inconsistent with the earliest stage of worship that we can discover or surmise. The poets and philosophers might dislike Ares; but the Hellenes, who worshipped him, did not worship him as an evil god, with apotropaeic rites: nor is it proved or likely that any deity to whom actual service was paid, was regarded as in his nature maleficent by his worshippers. The dread powers of the lower world were also givers of vegetation. The Erinyes had scarcely a recorded cult, and their wrath was moralised as righteous indignation; nor was ghost-cult, when it arose, merely a service of terror and aversion. It is a striking confirmation of the view here expressed, that among the very long list of cult-appellatives attached to the Greek divinities, some of which have a moral value, there are only two doubtful examples of an evil connotation attaching to the word.[1]

We may affirm generally, then, that the Mesopotamian and Hellenic religions are more or less on the same level of thought in respect of the moral and beneficent character of the deities. But careful study of the Hellenic will give us the impression that the terrible and destructive power of divinity is far less emphasised by cult than it was in the Eastern Semitic world. Every deity might be dangerous if neglected, and certainly would be if insulted. The idea of the "jealous god" is non-moral, and can easily become immoral: that is, it tends to divorce the conception of the divine character from the purely human moral ideal. And this idea is palpable not only in the Hellenic and Mesopotamian, but still more in the Judaic religion, and our own religion is not yet delivered from it. But apart

[1] Ἀφροδίτη ἀνδροφόνος or ἀνόσιος, *Cults*, ii. p. 665, and Διόνυσος ἀνθρωπορραίστης, *ib.*, v. p. 156.

from this, the Hellenic imagination, so far as we can discern it, even in its infancy, did not construct manifold forms of fear out of the dangerous powers in the nature-world, and worship them with the higher forms of cult. We do not come upon aboriginal thunder gods and storm gods *per se* (I use the term "god" advisedly): Zeus the thunderer had been civilised and moralised before Homer's time. Poseidon had always his wild side as god of storms and earthquakes; and to the end he remains rather more a non-moral nature-power than the others; but destructive force was certainly not the centre of his personality, and in the pre-historic days he had become the father of the Minyan and Ionic people, and the guardian of their family life. The wind-powers might develop into beneficent gods or ancestors; or might occasionally be regarded from the lower standpoint of polydaimonism, and averted by magical means. The higher Hellenic religion did not admit such beings as "Ira," the god of pestilence, or a special god of storms or earthquakes, and it is far less than the Babylonian a religion of fear. This difference will emerge more clearly in the study of ritual.

One more difference strikes us in comparing the ethical character of the two religions. The Greek high divinity is a moral being, but not every divinity was moralised to such an extent as were the higher powers of Mesopotamia. A few Hellenic deities remain ethically undeveloped and crude, Ares, for instance, and in a certain sense Hestia. A salient example is the contrast between the fire-god Hephaistos and the Babylonian-Sumerian Nusku or Girru.[1] Both are elemental powers of fire, both are therefore concerned with the arts of metal-work; but Hephaistos remains a handicraftsman, and

[1] Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], pp. 416–418; Jastrow, *op. cit.*, pp. 297, 487.

has little or nothing to do with moral life; whereas the Babylonian deity acquires an exalted moral and spiritual character. Dionysos becomes a most potent force in the later Hellenic world; yet an irrepressible vein of wildness and a spirit that refuses to conform to the ethical ideal of Hellas remains in him. A god so highly placed at Babylon would have been clothed with moral attributes in many an ecstatic phrase of temple liturgy.

It would be interesting to go more into detail concerning the special moral virtues consecrated by the two religions, or the various moral attributes specially attributed to the divinities. Such a study would demand two long treatises on Greek and Babylonian ethics. I have only time and power to indicate here a few points. The peoples of the old world show many general points of resemblance with each other in their moral ideas, and as compared with ourselves many salient points of difference. And moral statistics have rarely any value for proving the influence of one race upon another. As the Babylonian society was more complex in the second millennium than was the Hellenic, so must its morality have been; but it will not be found futile from the point of view of our main purpose to compare the two in respect of some special virtues, as we have already compared them incidentally in regard to the ideas about homicide.

The idea of the sin of perjury belongs to the earliest stage of religious ethic, and is the starting-point of much moral evolution. It is magical in its origin; for the oath-taker enters into communion with the divinity, by touching some sacred object or eating sacred food charged with divine power, which, being now within him, will blast him if he forswears. This dangerous power becomes interpreted as the anger

of the deity by whom the person swears falsely. Hence the belief arose in early Mesopotamia and Greece, and generally in the cults of personal gods, that they punish perjury as a dire offence: such punishment will fall on the community or individual, and often on both: therefore a social moral instinct arises against perjury. This might develop into a moral idea among a progressive people that truthfulness, quite apart from the ritual of the oath, was dear to God in any case, and was therefore a religious virtue. And of this religious virtue attaching to truthfulness, however it came to attach, we have evidence in a Babylonian ritual of confession; before the evil demon can be exorcised, the priest asked certain questions of the penitent, and twice he asks, "Has he said, yea for nay, and nay for yea?"[1] But in no Hellenic record have I ever been able to find a religious parallel to this. The Hellenic religious spirit was most sensitive in respect to perjury, and no religion ever reprobated it more. In regard to ordinary truthfulness, Hellenic religion had nothing to say, no message to give, and Hellenic ethics very little. In the poetic story, Athena smiles on the audacious mendacities of Odysseus, and Hermes loves the liar Autolykos. Not that the religion consecrated mendacity, only it failed to consecrate truth.

It is only the great Achilles who hates with the hate of hell the man who says one thing with his tongue and hides another thing in his heart.[2] This is the voice of northern honour, but it has no religious import.

The ideas connected with perjury have this further value for the history of ethics, that they contributed much to the growth of international morality. It is

[1] Weber, *Dämonenbeschwörung bei den Babyloniern und Assyrern*, p. 8.

[2] *Il.*, 9, 312.

often supposed that the earliest morality is merely tribal or clannish, and that in respect of the alien it is non-existent; but this account of morality is false wherever perjury is found to be a sin. For one great occasion for oath-taking is a treaty or a contract with an alien power. And Homer is our witness that it was considered an immoral act for either Achaeans or Trojans to break their mutual oath. And this early idea of international morality inspires the Tel-El-Amarna correspondence and the Hittite treaty with Rameses. International morality also includes the duty of hospitality, and the pre-Homeric world had developed this moral sense strongly, and no doubt through the aid of religion; the stranger who puts himself into communion with Hestia, the holy hearth, or with Zeus Xenios, has a moral right to protection, and the abduction of Helen was regarded as a sin on the part of Paris against Zeus the god of the guest-right. I have not yet been able to find a cult-concept in Babylonian religion parallel to that of Zeus Xenios, or any reference to hospitality as a sacred duty; yet we know that this was and is as highly regarded by some Semitic races as it ever was by the Hellenic. We may suspect, however, that as Babylonian society was in many respects very modern and complex, the religious sanction of hospitality had decayed.

Looking now at the moral code as regulating the relations of members of the same tribe or community, we cannot doubt that clan-morality was already highly developed in the proto-Hellenic period: the rights and duties of kinsmen are the basis of this morality, and these were consecrated by the worship around the altar of Zeus "in the courtyard," which may have been a primitive religious gathering-place for the kinsfolk of the early Aryan household. Homer is our first witness for the

cult of Zeus Ἑρκεῖος,[1] but it is evident that it had been long in existence before his time. The earliest moral duty that the tie of kinship imposes is the maintenance of peace and goodwill, and as the kindreds grow into a political community, this becomes the basis of political morality and the corner-stone of the religion of the city. The Homeric age, and probably their predecessors, have attained this ethical religious idea; and though Homer is the first to give voice to it, we will not suppose that he discovered it: "outcast from clan, from holy law, and holy hearth is he who longs for bitter battle among the people of his own township."[2] And to this early age we must also impute the religious morality of the monogamic family: the son fears the curse of the father and of the mother, even of the elder brother: "thou knowest that the powers of judgment defend the right of the elder-born"—Iris says warningly to Poseidon.[3] The Erinyes are specially charged with the preservation of the morality of the family and clan, and with the punishment of the two chief offences against the sacred blood of the kin, murder and incest. Of the first, enough has been said; the religious view of the earliest Greeks concerning the second is first attested by Homer, who mentions "the woes of Oedipus that the Furies of his mother bring to pass for him"; [4] he is thinking more of the incestuous marriage than of the parricide. As regards ordinary adultery, it is only from the later period of Greek literature that we hear protests against it as a sin, though the sentiment of moral indignation against the adulterer is no doubt pre-Homeric. One or two Greek myths that may reflect very early thought express the severe reprobation on the part of the father of

[1] *Od.*, 22, 334.
[2] *Il.*, 9, 63.
[3] *Il.*, 15, 204.
[4] *Od.*, 11, 280.

unchastity in his unmarried daughter; myths telling of cruel sentences of death imposed for the offence. But these suggest no religious feeling; the sentiment may well have arisen from the fact that under the patriarchal system the virgin-daughter was the more marriageable and commanded a higher bride-price.

Looking at the code of family and social duties in the ethical religion of Babylon, of which the private penitential hymns and confessional ritual of exorcism are the chief witnesses, we find no figures whose concept and function remind us at all of the Erinyes, the curse-powers on the side of righteousness; but there is evidence in the literature of a family morality more advanced and more articulate than the primitive Greek. Among the sins mentioned in the ritual of confession, alluded to above, those indicated by the following questions are of interest: "Has he caused variance between father and son, mother and daughter, father-in-law and daughter-in-law, brother and brother, friend and friend, partner and partner? Has he conceived hatred against his elder brother, has he despised his father and mother, insulted his elder sister?" [1] All these acts of social misconduct are supposed to give a man into the possession of the evil demon, which must be exorcised before God will admit him to his fellowship again. Though magical ideas are operative in the ceremony, yet we discern here a high religious morality. And among the other moral offences clearly considered as sins in the same formula are such as shedding one's neighbour's blood, committing adultery with one's neighbour's wife, stealing from one's neighbour. We find also a certain morality in the matter of property and commerce given a religious sanction in this text: "Thou shalt not

[1] Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

remove thy neighbour's landmark" was a religious law in ancient Babylonian ethics as in our present liturgy; it would appeal to the Hellene who reverenced Zeus Ὅριος; and there are reasons for believing this cult-idea to have been in vogue very early in Greece. The Babylonian code also recognises the sin of using false measure or false coin. And the confessional liturgy agrees in many points with the famous hymn to Shamash, where phrases occur such as "Shamash hates him who falsifies boundaries and weights"; "Shamash hates the adulterer."[1] It excites our envy also, by stamping as sins certain unpatriotic acts, such as "the spreading a bad report concerning one's city," or "bringing one's city into evil repute."

We may say, then, that we find a high degree of morality in early Greece, a still higher at a still earlier period in Babylon, and both are obviously indigenous and natural products. And both reveal the phenomenon that marks an early stage of social morality: as the tribe or the family are one flesh, one corporate unit of life, so the members are collectively responsible, and "the sins of the fathers are visited on the children." This was the familiar law of old Hellas, and we may say of the ancient Mediterranean society; the first to make the momentous protest against it, and to proclaim the responsibility of the individual conscience, was Theognis for the Hellenes and Ezekiel for the Hebrews. The Babylonian, advanced in moral thought as he was, had not escaped the bondage of the older clan-faith: in an incantation-hymn to Marduk,[2] the man who is seeking deliverance prays "may the sins of my father, of my grandfather, my mother, my grandmother, my family,

[1] Gray, *Samaš Religious Texts* (British Museum), Hymn 1.
[2] Zimmern, *Babylonische Hymnen u. Gebete*, p. 18.

my whole circle of kindred, not come near me, may they depart from my side."

One other characteristic of early moral thought and feeling is that the sense of sin is not wholly ethical according to our modern criteria, but is partly regarded as something external to the will and purpose, something inherent in certain acts or substances of which the performance or the contagion renders a man a sinner. Thus in the Babylonian confessional liturgy and hymns of penitence, while there is much that would appeal to the most delicate moral consciousness, and is on the same level with the most spiritual passages in the Hebrew psalms, there is also a strong admixture of what is alien and non-moral. The confessional formula [1] asks a man, for instance, "whether he has sat in the chair of a person under a ban," that is, "a man forbid," a person impure and under a curse; "whether he has met him, has slept in his bed, has drunk from his cup." In one of the penitential hymns that might be addressed to any god, "to the god that I know, and to the god that I do not know," as the formula expresses it, we find such sorrowful confessions as "without knowing it, I have eaten of that which is abominable in the sight of my god: without knowing it, I have trodden on that which is filthy in the sight of my goddess"; "my sins are many, great is my transgression." [2] This must be taken quite literally: contact with unclean things or with unclean persons, eating of forbidden food, is put in the same category with serious offences against social morality, and all these expose a man equally to the power of the evil demon and to the loss of his God's protection. And this is a half-civilised development in Babylonian psychology of the primeval savage

[1] Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 9. [2] Zimmern, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

law of tabu : nor, as I think, is there yet any proof that the people of the Mesopotamian culture ever attained to the highest plane of ethical enlightenment; the later Zarathustrian religion of the Persian domination is strongly fettered by this ritualistic morality, in which the distinction between that which is morally wrong and that which is physically unclean, is never clearly apprehended.

This mental attitude is supported in the older and later Mesopotamian system by a vivid polydaimonism ; the evil demon is on the alert to destroy the family and the individual ; and where the demon is in possession the god departs. As the demon takes advantage of every accidental act, whether conscious or unconscious, the idea arises in the over-anxious spirit that one cannot be sure when or how often one has sinned, and all illness or other misfortune is attributed to some unknown offence.[1] The utterance of the Hebrew psalmist, " who can tell how oft he offendeth : cleanse Thou me from my secret faults," may express the intense sensitiveness of a very spiritual morality, or it may be merely ritualistic anxiety. This latter is certainly the explanation of the strikingly similar phrases in a Babylonian penitential hymn—" the sins that I have done I know not ; the trespass that I have committed I know not." [2] The feeling of sin is here deep and very moving—" take away from me my wickedness as a cloak . . . my God, though my sins be seven times seven, yet undo my sins " ; yet the context that illustrates this passionate outpouring of the heart, shows that the sin might be such as the accidental stepping on filth. Such ideas, allowed to obsess the mind, easily engender despondency and

[1] " I have sinned and am therefore ill," is the conventional formula in the confessional exorcism (Zimmern, *op. cit.*, p. 26).

[2] Zimmern, *op. cit.*, pp. 23–24.

pessimism ; and this tone is heard and once or twice is very marked in some of the most striking products of Babylonian religious poetry ; for instance, in the penitential hymn just quoted from, the poet sorrowfully exclaims : " Men are dumb, and of no understanding : all men who live on the earth, what do they understand ? Whether they do right, or wrong, they understand nothing." But the strangest example of this is a lyric of lamentation that reminds us vividly of the book of Job, found in the library of Assurbanipal, and of great antiquity and of wide vogue, as Zimmern shows.[1] It is a masterpiece of the poetry of pessimism : the theme is the sorrow and tribulation of the righteous who has served God faithfully all his life, and feels at the last that he has had no profit of it ; and his main thought is expressed in the lines, " If I only knew that such things were pleasing before God ; but that which seems good to a man's self, is evil in the sight of God : and that which according to each man's sense is to be despised, is good in the sight of his God. Who can understand the counsel of the Gods in heaven ? A god's plan is full of darkness, who hath searched it out ? "

It is easy in all this to detect the intimate associations with Biblical thought and feeling ; and we may trace back to Babylon the daimonistic theory of morals that colours the New Testament, and has prevailed throughout the centuries of Christendom, and is only slowly losing its hold. But at the same time all this sharply divides early Babylonian thought from what we can discern of the early Hellenic, and more than any other evidence confirms the belief that the great Eastern and Western races were not in close spiritual contact at the time when Hellenism was in the making. Certain

[1] *Op. cit.*, pp. 28–30.

external resemblances in the thought and feeling about these matters are to be found in Hellas and in Mesopotamia; that is to say, the germs are identical, for they are broadcast all over the world; but the intensity of their cultivation, and their importance in relation to other life-forces, are immeasurably different. In the earliest Greek legend we discover the reflex of that external unpurposive morality that I have tried to define above: the acts of Oedipus were not according to our moral judgment ethically wrong, for they were wholly unintentional: yet in the oldest legend he is πᾶς ἄναγνος, as he calls himself in Sophocles' play, and a sinner in the eyes of the gods; nor could all the virtue and valour of Bellerophon save him from the wrath of heaven aroused by the accidental slaying of his brother. Certain acts were supposed to put upon a man a quasi-physical, quasi-spiritual miasma, without reference to will or purpose, and render him hateful to God and man But the bondage of the Greek mind to this idea was slighter and more temporary. And after all, the external sins in these legends were parricide, incest, and fratricide, dreadful things enough in themselves. We do not hear of any Hellene's agony of remorse on account of treading accidentally on filth, or eating malodorous food. Homer, indeed, is marvellously untroubled by any ritualistic pharisaic code; we might even take him as a witness that there was none at all in earliest Hellas. We should be undoubtedly wrong. The early Greek must have had, like all mankind, his "tabus" in plenty; for to suppose that all that we find in Hesiod and in the later inscriptions were a sudden discovery, would be childish. I may be able to consider the evidence concerning early Greek tabus when I compare the ritual. I will only say here that we have

reason to believe that at no period was the Hellene morbidly perturbed about these, or ever moralised them up to that point where they could exercise a spiritual tyranny over his moral sense. He might object to touching a corpse or to approaching an altar with blood upon him ; but it does not seem to have occurred to him, as it did to the Persian, and with almost equal force to the Babylonian, that accidental contact with an impure thing instantly started into existence an army of demons, who would rush abroad to destroy the world of righteousness.[1]

In fact, Hellenic tabus and purification-laws, except, indeed, the law concerning purification from bloodshed, had only this contact with religion, that the breach of them might offend an irritable divinity, which it would be unwise to do ; they were not religious, so far as we can discern, in the sense that they were associated with a vivid belief in evil spirits, as they were in the Babylonian and Persian creeds. There were germs indeed which might have developed into a vigorous daimonistic theory in early Hellas. We hear even in Homer of such unpleasant things as "a black Kér" ; and a mythic hero of Megara kills a monster called a ποινή, almost, we may say, a devil. Certain days, according to Hesiod, might be unlucky, because perhaps Erinyes or ghosts were walking about, though that popular poet is not clear about this. But certainly not in early nor often in later Greece were men habitually devil-ridden : nor did they see devils in food or blood or mud. Therefore, on the whole and comparatively, early Greek religion, when we first catch a glimpse of it, appears bright and sane, a religion of the healthy-minded and of men in the open air. And

[1] *Vide* my *Evolution of Religion*, p. 128.

therefore, when secular philosophy arose, Greek moral theory made no use of evil spirits except in certain Pythagorean circles where we may detect Oriental influence. Superstition and magic must have been more rife in ancient Greece than the Homeric picture would lead us to suppose: yet the higher culture of the people, in the earliest period which we are considering, was comparatively free from these influences and refused to develop by religious speculation or anxious brooding the germs of daimonism always embedded in the lower stratum of the national mind. The Universe could not, therefore, be viewed by the Hellene as it was by the Zarathustrian, and to some extent by the Babylonian, as the arena of a cosmic struggle between the powers of good and the powers of evil. Nor could the Hellene personify the power of evil majestically, in such a guise as Ahriman or Satan; he only was aware of certain little daemon-figures of death and disease, ghostly shadows rather than fully outlined personages; or such vaguely conceived personal agencies as Ate and Eris, which belonged not to religion, but to the poetic-moral thought of the people. When we compare the various rituals, we shall discern that the Hellenic was by no means wholly bright or shallow, but that some of its most ancient forms were gloomy and inspired by a sense of sin or sorrow: nevertheless, it is just in respect of the comparative weakness of this sense that it differed most markedly from the Babylonian.

There are other aspects of the divine character interesting to compare in the religious theory of East and West. Despite the apparent grimness of the Babylonian-Assyrian theology, no divine trait is more movingly insisted on in the liturgies than the merciful-

ness of the deity : Nebo is " the merciful, the gracious " ;[1] Ishtar is " the mighty lady of the world, queen of humanity, merciful one, whose favour is propitious, who hath received my prayer " ;[2] Sarpanitum is addressed as " the intercessor, the protectress of the captive " ;[3] Shamash as " the merciful god, who liftest up those that are bowed down and protectest the weak " ;[4] Sin as " the compassionate, gracious Father " ; and " Gamlat the merciful " is mentioned as a descriptive general epithet of an unknown Assyrian deity.[5]

These phrases may attest in the end a genuine and fervent faith ; but originally they were probably inspired by the word-magic of penitence, the sinner believing that he can make the deity merciful by repeatedly calling him so. At any rate, Babylonian religion catches thus the glow of a high ethical ideal ; and as the deities were invoked and regarded as by nature merciful, so the private man was required at certain times to show mercy, as the confessional formula proves. The same idea, though a less fervent and ecstatic expression is given to it, is found in the oldest record of Greek religion : " Even the gods are moved to pity . . . them men turn aside from wrath by sacrifice, libation, and gentle prayers, when a man hath sinned and trespassed against them. For prayers are the daughters of great God, . . . and if a man do them honour when they come anigh him, to him they bring great blessings, and hear him when he prayeth." This Homeric utter-

[1] Roscher, *Lexikon*, iii. p. 49.

[2] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

[3] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 536. For the idea of the goddess as the pleader for man before the high god, cf. the prayer of Ashurbanapal to Ninlil (Jastrow, p. 525).

[4] Zimmern, *op. cit.*, p. 15 ; *ib.*, p. 11.

[5] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

ance in the great speech of Phoenix [1] is the voice of a high and civilised religion; and the idea inspires the ancient cults of Zeus μειλίχιος and ἱκέσιος.

The Babylonian conception of divine mercy gave rise to an interesting phrase which is attached as a quasi-liturgical formula to many of the leading gods and goddesses—"the awakener of the dead," "thou who raisest up the dead": a phrase which has erroneously been supposed to refer to an actual resurrection of the dead: [2] various contexts attest its real significance as an expression of the divine grace shown in restoring the sick to health, in saving men from the hand of death. Hellenic religious vocabulary affords no parallel to this formula nor to that title of Enlil—"Lord of the breath of life of Sumer"; [3] or that of Bel, "Lord of the life of the Land." [4] In some passages of Babylonian literature we mark the glimmering of the idea that life in its varied forms on the earth is a divine substance sustained by the personal deity. Ishtar is described as the protectress of all animate existence, and all life languishes when she descends to the nether regions.[5] The goddess of Erech, identified with Ishtar, speaking of her own functions, exclaims, "In the place of giving birth in the house of the begetting mother, guardian of the home am I." [6] It is specially Tammuz who, by the side of Ishtar, impersonates the life of the soil, as appears in the striking refrain recurring in his hymn of lament: "When he slumbers, the sheep and the lambs slumber also;

[1] *Il.*, 9, 497; cf. my *Cults*, i. pp. 72–73, 75–77.
[2] *Vide* Jeremias in Roscher's *Lexikon*, ii. p. 2355.
[3] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 225.
[4] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 490.
[5] *Ib.*, p. 529.
[6] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

when he slumbers, the she-goats and the kids slumber also" ;[1] and the same thought may have inspired a phrase that is doubtfully translated at the end of the hymn: "In the meadows, verily, verily, the soul of life perishes." Still more explicit is another Tammuz hymn, in which, while bewailing the departed god, they wail for all the life of the earth, "the wailing is for the herbs; . . . they are not produced: the wailing is for the grain, ears are not produced: the wailing is for the habitations, for the flocks, the flocks bring forth no more. The wailing is for the perishing wedded ones, for the perishing children; the dark-headed people create no more."

In all this we see the reflection of a pantheistic feeling that links the living world and the personal divine power in a mystic sympathy. Now the idea of divinity immanent in living nature is inconsistent with a severely defined anthropomorphic religion; hence we scarcely find it in the earlier religion of Hellas. Zeus is called the father of men and gods, but in a reverential rather than in any literal creative sense: nor is there found any trace of the idea that divine power is immanent in the life or soul of man, till we come to the later period of philosophic speculation and Orphism. Only here and there behind the anthropomorphism we discern in Hellenic myth or cult the vaguer thought of diffused and immanent divinity; this reveals itself more than once in the myth and cult of Demeter, whose anger and sorrow at the loss of her daughter causes a sympathetic disappearance of the crops and the fruits of the earth; and it is embodied in the Attic cult on the Akropolis of Demeter Χλόη,[2] which title expresses the immanence in the verdure of

[1] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 319.

[2] *Cults*, iii. p. 33.

the life-giving potency of the goddess. The ancient folklore of Greece, and a few cult-records of the primitive village-communities, reveal figures that recall faintly the lineaments of Tammuz, Eunostos of Tanagra, Skephros of Tegea, who may belong, as Linos certainly did, to that group of heroes of crop and harvest, who die and are bewailed in the fall of the year, and whose life is sympathetically linked with the life of the earth. But we find this type of personage in other parts of Europe, and there is every reason for believing that the western shores of the Mediterranean had not been touched by the Tammuz-myth and service in the second millennium B.C.

The evidence then suggests that the pregnant idea of the godhead as the source of life was more prominent and more articulate in Babylonian than in Hellenic religion.

CHAPTER IX.

Purity a Divine Attribute.

We may next consider the attribute of purity as a divine characteristic, to see whether in this respect the East differed markedly from the West. As regards ritual-law, all the religions of the old world agree in demanding ritual-purity: the worshipper who approaches the deities must be free from physical taint and impurity: this idea is so world-wide and so deeply embedded in primitive thought, that the mere presence of it is of no service for proving the interdependence of any religions in the historic period. From this ritual-law the concept naturally arises of "pure gods," deities who themselves are believed to be pure because they insist on purity in their worshippers. Marduk is called "the purifier" in one of the incantation-texts, in allusion to his power of exorcising the evil demon of sickness by cleansing processes.[1] The cathartic rules that the law of ritual prescribes will differ according to the instincts and prejudices of different societies. But the Babylonian service demanded more than mere ritual-purity; for instance, in a fragment of a striking text published by Delitsch, we find this injunction: "In the sight of thy God thou shalt be pure of heart, for that is the distinction of the Godhead." [2]

[1] Roscher, *Lexikon*, ii. p. 2354.
[2] *Vide* Jeremias, *Die Cultus-Tafel von Sippar*, p. 29.

As regards the moral and spiritual sense of purity, the sense in which we speak of "purity of heart," we should naturally include purity in respect of sexual indulgence. But in applying this test to the Mesopotamian religion we are confronted with a singular difficulty. In the first place, the mythology is strikingly pure in our modern sense of the word, so far as the materials have as yet been put before us. It agrees in this respect with the Hebraic, and differs markedly from the Hellenic; the gods live in monogamic marriage with their respective goddesses, and we have as yet found no licentious stories of their intrigues. It may be that generally the Babylonian imagination was restrained by an austerity and shy reverence that did not control the more reckless and lighter spirit of the Hellene; or it may be that the priestly and royal scribes, to whom we owe the whole of the Babylonian religious literature that has come down to us, deliberately excluded any element of licentiousness that they may have found in the lower folklore. But there is one curious exception. In the Epic of Gilgamesh the hero repulses the proffered love of Ishtar, and taunts her with her cruel amours, giving a long list of her lovers whom she had ruined: one of these is Tammuz, "the spouse of thy youth," upon whom "thou didst lay affliction every year": then he mentions her other lovers who suffered at her hands—a singular list: a bird, a lion, a horse, a shepherd of the flock, some Babylonian Paris or Anchises, whom Ishtar treated as Artemis treated Aktaion. We must suppose these allusions are drawn from Babylonian folklore, of which nothing else has survived, concerning the amorous adventures of the goddess. Hence modern accounts are apt to impute a licentious character to Ishtar, as a goddess of violent

and lawless passion, and to connect with this aspect of her the institution in her temple at Erech of the service of sacred prostitutes, attested by certain cuneiform texts. In comparing the ritual of East and West, I shall give some consideration to this phenomenal practice. But this view of Ishtar is utterly contrary to that presented of her in the hymns and liturgies. Not only are certain hymns to Ishtar transcendently noble and spiritual in tone, surpassing most of the greatest works of Babylonian religious poetry, but certain phrases specially exalt her as the virgin-goddess. In one of the lamentations we read, "Virgin, virgin, in the temple of my riches, am I." [1] "The spirit-maid, glory of Heaven: the Maiden Ishtar, glory of Heaven." [2] In a psalm to Nana, one of the by-names of Ishtar, she is called "Virgin-goddess of Heaven"; [3] in another she speaks of herself, "she of the pure heart, she without fear was I." [4] This virgin-character of hers must then be regarded as fixed by such epithets and phrases, of which more examples might no doubt be found. Therefore the phrase attached to her in the Epic of Gilgamesh,[5] "Kadisti Ilani," must not be translated as Dhorme would translate it,[6] "the courtesan of the Gods," merely on the ground that the same word is applied to her temple-harlots: for the word properly means "pure" from stain, hence "holy," [7] and in this latter sense it could be applied to her consecrated votaries, in spite of their service, which seems to us

[1] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 191.
[2] *Ib.*, p. 193.
[3] *Ib.*, p. 289.
[4] *Ib.*, p. 3.
[5] Tabl. 9, 1, 11.
[6] *Choix des textes religieux Assyriens Babyloniens*, p. 270.
[7] *Vide* Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 423; but cf. his *Beiträge zur Kenntniss d. Babyl. Relig.*, ii. p. 179, "trefflich ist die grosse Buhle die herrliche Ištar."

impure: the same word "Kedesh" is used for the votaries of the same ritual in Phoenicia and Syria. This apparent contradiction in the conception of Ishtar's character is sometimes explained [1] by the suggestion that she was really a combination of two distinct goddesses, a voluptuous and effeminate goddess of Erech, and a pure and warlike Assyrian goddess of Nineveh. But there is no real contradiction; for in Babylonian religious and liturgical literature the lower view of Ishtar is never presented at all. She is always worshipped as pure and holy; the licentiousness of folklore, if there was any such in vogue, was not allowed to intrude into the temple-service. Therefore Ishtar is no real exception to the rule that purity, even in our sense, is a prevailing characteristic of Babylonian divinity, as it was of the Hebraic.

But now another phenomenon claims our interest: while being a virgin-goddess, she is sometimes addressed as a mother. In the inscription of Sargon (722–705 B.C.) she is described as "the Lady of the Heavenly Crown, the Mother of the Gods"; [2] and in some of the older hymns, which have already been quoted, she speaks of herself at one time as mother and at another as maid: "Mother who knows lamentation," and "I am the Virgin-Goddess." [3] Similarly, in the hymn to Nana she is called in one place "the Virgin-Goddess of Heaven"; in another, "Mother of the faithful breasts." [4] Another goddess, Bau, who is eminently the mother or the wife-goddess, the spouse of Ningirsu or Ninib, is characterised in a hymn to the latter god as "thy spouse, the maid, the Lady of Nippur." [5]

[1] *E.g.* by Dhorme, *op. cit.*
[2] *Keilinschr. Bibl.*, ii. p. 47.
[3] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
[4] *Ib.*, p. 289.
[5] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, 460.

From these phrases, then, seems to emerge the conception of a virgin-mother. Only we must not press it too far, or suppose at all that it crystallised into a dogma. It is characteristic of the ecstatic Babylonian imagination that in the swoon of rapture the intellect does not sharply hold contradictions apart, and the mystic enthusiasm reconciles contrary ideas as fused in one divine personality. Thus even a divinity naturally and properly male, might be mystically addressed as Father-Mother, for the worshipper craves that the godhead should be all in all to him. Thus motherhood is the natural function and interest of the goddess; therefore the Babylonian supplicated his goddess as mother, even as mother of the gods, without thinking of any divine offspring or of any literal genealogy or theogony. Virginity is also beautiful, and a source of divine power and virtue. Therefore the mother Bau might rejoice to be addressed occasionally as maid. As for Ishtar, she was aboriginally, perhaps, a maid, in the sense that no god entered into her worship; and this idea shaped the early spiritual conception of her. But as a great goddess she must show her power in the propagation of life; therefore she must be recognised in prayer and supplication as a mother; the adorer wishing to give her the virtue of both states, probably without dogmatising or feeling the contradiction. This explanation appears more likely, when we consider the psychologic temper of the Babylonian poetry, its often incoherent rapture, than the other obvious one that Ishtar the virgin happened in many places to appropriate to herself the cult of a mother-goddess, though this might easily happen.

As regards the other polytheistic Semitic races, we can infer that the same religious ideas concerning ritual-

purity were in vogue; but our scanty records do not enable us to determine whether and how far they were quickened by spiritual significance.[1] But we can trace through Asia Minor the double concept of mother and virgin in the personality of the goddesses; though it is difficult to decide whether they ever coincided, and with what degree of definiteness, in the same personage. Astarte must have been imagined generally as a mother-goddess, and she appears conspicuously as the female consort of Baal; thus her Hellenic equivalent is often given as Aphrodite; yet in another aspect of her worship she must have appeared as virginal, for she is also often identified with Artemis, just as a similar goddess Anath in Cyprus was identified with Athena.[2] The goddess Atargatis of Hierapolis, described by Lucian, was evidently a mother-goddess, bearing, according to him, a marked resemblance to Rhea, and placed in the temple by the side of her husband, Bel or Zeus. Among the Sabaean inscriptions of South Arabia, we find a dedication by some parents in behalf of their children to the goddess Umm-Attar, a name that signifies "Mother-Attar" (or "Mother Astarte"[3]); and a late record, too late to serve as witness for the early period we are considering, speaks of a virgin-mother among the Arabs.[4] Finally, the earliest Carthaginian inscriptions record the cult of the great goddess Tanit, addressed usually as the "Lady Tanit, the Face of Baal," and called in one dedication "The Great Mother."[5] If she is the same as the divinity whom Augustine describes as the Virgo Caelestis, the

[1] Only a late Greek inscription from Berytos designates Baal as the pure God θεῷ ἁγίῳ (Dittenberger, *Orient. Graec. Inscr.*, 590).

[2] Lagrange, *Études sur les religions sémitiques*, p. 482.

[3] *Vide* Weber, *Arabien vor dem Islam*, p. 18.

[4] Epiphanius, *Panarium*, 51; cf. my *Cults*, ii. 629.

[5] *C. I. Sem.*, 1, 1, 195.

Heavenly Virgin,[1] then either the dual concept was mystically combined in the same personage, or the Carthaginian goddess was worshipped at different times and at different seasons as the mother and then as the maid. But the evidence is quite uncertain, and we must not combine too rashly the records of different ages.

Looking at the non-Semitic races of Asia Minor, we have noted the monumental evidence among the Hittites for the worship of a mother-goddess, who with her son figures in the procession on the reliefs at Boghaz-Keui. It may be she who appears on a Hittite votive relief as a large seated female with a child on her knees,[2] a type which the Greeks would call κουροτρόφος. Her name may have been Umma ; for this divine word is now given us among the names of Hittite divinities in cuneiform texts recently discovered, which have been published and interpreted by Professor Sayce in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*.[3] He there connects the word with the Assyrian Umma = Mother, and regards this Hititte goddess as the ancestress both by name and nature of the Cappadocian goddess Mā, famous at Comana in the later period. Now the name Mā designates " the mother," and yet the Hellenes identified this goddess not only with the great mother Kybele, but freely with Artemis. I believe the external inducement to this latter assimilation was the isolation of Mā in her cult, into which no god entered. From this late evidence it is too hazardous to infer an early Hittite virgin-mother, especially as the processional relief at Boghaz-Keui seems to present us with a ἱερὸς γάμος, the solemn union of a god and a goddess. As regards the great goddess of the Asia-Minor coast, it

[1] *De Civ. Dei*, 2, 4 ; cf. Roscher, *Lexikon*, i., *s.v.* " Caelestis." *C.I.L.*, 8, 9796.

[2] Perrot et Chipiez, *op. cit.*, iv. fig. 280.

[3] Year 1909.

has been somewhat hastily concluded that here and there her cult included the mystic idea of a virgin-mother. We have only some evidence from a late period, and in any case it would be a bold leap to argue back from it to the second millennium. But the evidence is weak. I have criticised it elsewhere, and I found it and still find it very frail.[1] I have not been able to detect any clear consciousness of the idea in the cult and cult-legends of Kybele : we must not build much on the Pessinuntian story that Arnobius gives us concerning her resistance to the love of Zeus, for certainly the general legend of Kybele and Attis is inconsistent with any dogma of the goddess's virginity, nor was she ever called Παρθένος in cult. She was rather the mother-goddess, with whom the worshipper himself in a mystic ritual might be united in corporeal union.[2]

If we search the other parts of the Asia-Minor littoral, neither in the prehistoric nor in the later periods before Christianity is the concept we are seeking clearly to be traced. I cannot find the Leto-Artemis, the goddess who was at once essentially a virgin and a mother. What we discern in Crete is a great mother-goddess and a virgin, Ἀφαία or Britomartis, "the Sweet Maid." That the prehistoric or later Cretans mystically com-

[1] Vide *Cults*, iii. pp. 305–306 ; Sir William Ramsay, in *Amer. Journ. Arch.*, 1887, p. 348, expressed his belief in the prevalence of the cult of an Anatolian goddess in the later period, regarded as a virgin-mother and named Artemis-Leto ; the fact is merely that the goddess Anaitis was usually identified with Artemis, but occasionally with Leto ; but we nowhere find Artemis explicitly identified with Leto, and the interpretation which he gives to the Messapian inscription (Artamihi Latho[i], vide *Rhein. Mus.*, 1887, p. 232, Deeke) appears to me unconvincing.

[2] The fact that a part of her temple at Kyzikos was called Παρθενών does not indicate a virgin-goddess. M. Reinach is, in my opinion, right in explaining it as "the apartment of the maidens" where the maiden priestesses assembled (*Bull. Corr. Hell.*, 1908, p. 499).

bined the two concepts in one personality we do not know. When we examine legends and ritual, usually dateless, of early Hellas, we are aware that a goddess who was worshipped as a Maid in one locality might be worshipped as a Mother in another; or the same goddess at different times of the year might be worshipped now under one aspect, now under another. Hera of Argos yearly renews her divinity by bathing in a certain stream. Kore, the young earth-goddess, was probably an early emanation from Demeter. How powerful in pre-Hellenic days was the appeal of the virginal aspect of certain goddesses, is shown by the antiquity and the tenacity of the dogma concerning the virginity of Artemis and Athena. Yet the latter was called Μήτηρ at Elis[1]. But it would be very rash to declare that here at last the Virgin-Mother is found in old Greece. Athena has no offspring; there is neither loss nor miraculous preservation of her virginity. Only the Elean women, wishing themselves to be mothers, pray to the Virgin-goddess for offspring, and strengthen their prayer by applying a word to Athena of such powerful spell-efficacy as "Mother." It would be a misinterpretation of the method of ancient hieratic speech to suppose that Athena Μήτηρ was mystically imagined as herself both Virgin and Mother.[2]

The ritualistic value of purity was probably a postulate of the religious feeling of early Hellas, though Homer gives us only faint glimpses of the idea. Φοῖβος was an old cult-title of Apollo, and its root-significance may well have been "Pure." We hear of Hagné, "the pure goddess," probably a reverential

[1] *Cults*, vol. i., "Athena," R. 66.

[2] A different view of the whole question might be presented if I was dealing here with the evidence gleaned from the period just before Christianity.

name for Kore at the Messenian Andania : [1] and on the hilltop above the Arcadian Pallantion, Pausanias records the cult of a nameless group of divinities called *οἱ καθαροὶ θεοί*,[2] a cult which, according to his account of it, appears to have descended from very ancient times. The question of purity in Greek ritual may be reserved for a later stage in our comparative study. I will only remark here on the fact that Greek worship, early and late, was in marked antagonism in this respect to Greek mythology, the former being on the whole solemn and beautiful, the latter often singularly impure. In fact, both in the Phrygian and Hellenic popular imagination we detect an extraordinary vein of grossness, that seems to mark off these Aryan peoples sharply from the Mesopotamians, and equally, as far as we can see, from the other Semites.

[1] *Cults*, iii. p. 206. [2] 8, 44, 5.

CHAPTER X.

The Concept of Divine Power and the Ancient Cosmogonies.

We may profitably compare the Eastern and Western peoples according to their respective conceptions of the divine power. Looking carefully at the Babylonian hymns and liturgies, we cannot say that the idea of divine omnipotence was ever an assured dogma, vividly present to the mind and clearly expressed. Any particular hymn may so exalt the potency of the particular deity to whom it is addressed that, in the ecstasy of prayer and adoration, the worshipper may speak as if he believed him or her to be powerful over all things in heaven and earth. But this faith was temporary and illusive. The power of the deity in the popular creed, and indeed in the hieratic system, was bound up with his temple and altar. When Sanherib laid waste Babylon and the temples, the "gods must flee like birds up to heaven." In the Babylonian epic the deities themselves are greatly alarmed by the flood. In one of the hymns of lamentation, Ishtar laments her own overthrow in her ruined city, where she "is as a helpless stranger in her streets." [1] It is probable that the popular belief of Babylon agreed in this respect with that of all other nations of the same type of religion; for the popular religious mind is incapable of fully

[1] Langdon, *op. cit.*, pp. 1; 7.

realising or logically applying the idea of divine omnipotence. But this at least is clear in the Babylonian system, that the higher divinities acting as a group are stronger than any other alien principle in the Universe, from the period when Marduk, or originally, perhaps Ninib, won his victory over Tiamit.[1] The evil power embodied in the demons remains indeed active and strong, and much of the divine agency is devoted to combating them. And the demons are impressive beings, impersonating often the immoral principle, but they do not assume the grandeur of an Ahriman, or rise to his position as compeers of the high god. Thus the Babylonian theology escapes the duality of the Zarathustrian; the god can always exorcise and overpower the demon if the demon-ridden man repents and returns to communion with his deity by penance and confession.

Furthermore, the ancient documents reveal the Babylonian deities as the arbiters of destiny. Marduk is named by King Neriglassar "the Leader of Destiny"; [2] and we have frequent allusions to the gods fixing the yearly fates at an annual meeting. Nebo the scribe is the writer and the keeper of the "Doomsbook" of Heaven, and this book is called "the tablets that cannot be altered, that determine the bounds (or cycle) of Heaven and Earth." [3] Fate is neither personified nor magnified into a transcendent cosmic force overpowering and shaping the will of the gods.

How the other religions of polytheistic Asia Minor dealt with these matters is not revealed; and the

[1] *Vide* Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 225.
[2] *Vide* Roscher, *Lexikon*, ii. p. 2348.
[3] *Vide* Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 401.

comparison here, as in many other points, must be immediate between Mesopotamia and Hellas. Much that has just been said of the former may be affirmed of the latter in this respect. In Homer the pre-eminence, even the omnipotence, of Zeus is occasionally expressed as a dogma, and we must believe that this deity had risen to this commanding position before the Homeric period, at least among the progressive tribes;[1] and throughout the systematised theology of Greece his sovereignty was maintained more consistently than, owing to the shifting of the powers of the cities, was that of Marduk or Bel or Enlil in the Sumerian-Babylonian system. Probably the high idea of divine omnipotence was as vaguely and feebly realised by the average primitive Hellene as we have reason to suspect that it was by the average Babylonian. Also, as Hellas was far less centralised than Babylonia, the efficacy of the local or village god or goddess or daimon might often transcend the influence of Zeus. But at least we have no Hellenic evidence of so narrow a theory, as that the deity's power depended upon his temple or his image, or even upon his sacrifice.

It has often been popularly and lightly maintained that the Hellenic deities were subordinate to a power called Fate. This is a shallow misjudgment, based on a misinterpretation of a few phrases in Homer; we may be certain that the aboriginal Hellene was incapable of so gloomy an abstraction, which would sap the vitality of personal polytheism, and which only appears in strength in the latter periods of religious decay. Were it, indeed, a root-principle of Hellenic religion, it would strongly differentiate it from the Mesopotamian.

[1] Even the Pythian Apollo, in our earliest record of his oracle, is only the voice of "the counsels of God" (cf. Hom. *Od.*, 8, 79).

In thus comparing the two religions according to their respective conceptions of divine power, we note two striking phenomena in the Eastern world. The Mesopotamian gods are magicians, and part of their work is worked by magic. Marduk and Ea, the wise deity of Eridu, serve as exorcisers of demons in behalf of the other gods.[1] In a panegyric on the former, the strange phrase occurs, "the spittle of life is thine," [2] which probably alludes to the well-known magical qualities of the saliva. Eridu, the home of Ea, was also the original home of Chaldean magic. When in the early cosmic struggle between the powers of light and darkness, Tiamat, the mother and queen of the latter, selects her champion Qingou as leader, she proclaims, "I have pronounced thy magic formula, in the assembly of the gods I have made thee great." [3] In magic, great is the power of the spoken word, the λόγος; and the Word, of which the efficacious force arose in the domain of magic, has been exalted, as we are well aware, by higher religion to a great cosmic divine agency, sometimes personified. It was so exalted in early Babylonian religion. The deity acts and controls the order of the world by the divine Word. Many of the Sumerian hymns lay stress on its quasi-personal virtue or "mana"; and often on its terrible and destructive operation; and in one, as we have seen, the goddess Nana is identified with the Word of Enlil.[4] In a great hymn to Sin,[5] the might of his Word is glorified in verses that recall the Psalmist's phrase: "The voice of the Lord is mighty

[1] Weber, *Dämonenbeschwörung bei den Babyloniern und Assyrern*, p. 7.

[2] Roscher, *Lexikon*, ii. p. 2355, quoting Hymn iv. R. 29, 1.

[3] Dhorme, *Choix*, etc., p. 25, l. 39.

[4] *E.g.* Langdon, *op. cit.*, pp. 39–41; cf. p. xix.

[5] Zimmern, *Babyl. Hymne u. Gebete*, p. 8.

in operation." The Word of Bel-Marduk is said to be stronger than any exorciser or diviner, and is the theme of a special hymn.[1] It is described in another as "a net of majesty that encompasseth heaven and earth." The Word of Marduk shakes the sea,[2] as the Hebrew poet declares that "the voice of the Lord shaketh the cedar-trees." "The spirit of the Word is Enlil . . . the Word which stilleth the heavens above . . . a prophet it hath not, a magician it hath not,"[3]—that is, no prophet can fully interpret, no magician can control, the Word. A most potent word is the name of the divinity, and the partial apotheosis of the name itself is a strange religious phenomenon, which also originated in the domain of magic, and has played a momentous part in the Egyptian, Judaic, Christian, and other high religions.[4] It appears also in Mesopotamian religion. In a hymn to Enlil we find the phrase: "at thy name, which created the world, the heavens were hushed of themselves."[5] In the Babylonian poem of creation the primal state of Chaos is thus described, "no god had yet been created, no name had yet been named, no destiny fixed."[6] The gods name the fifty names of Ninib, and the name of fifty becomes sacred to him, so that even in the time of Gudea a temple was actually dedicated to Number Fifty.[7]

Now, in the respects just considered, the earliest aspect of Greek religion that is revealed to us presents a striking contrast. The relations between magic and

[1] Dhorme, *Choix*, etc., p. 343.
[2] Roscher, *Lexikon*, ii. p. 2367 (iv. R. 26, n. 4).
[3] Langdon, *op. cit.*, pp. 39, 99.
[4] *Vide* my essays in *Evolution of Religion*, pp. 184–192.
[5] Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 129.
[6] Dhorme, *op. cit.*, p. 5, l. 7.
[7] Jeremias, *Hölle und Paradies*, p. 12; Roscher, *Lexikon*, *s.v.* "Ninib," iii. p. 368.

religion are markedly different.[1] Magic had doubtless the same hold on early Greece as it has on most societies at a certain stage of culture. We can conclude this from the glimpses of it revealed by Homer and some ancient myths, such as the story of Salmoneus, as well as by the evidence of its practice in later Greece, and as such phenomena are not of sudden growth we can safely believe that they were part of an ancient tradition always alive among the people. But while Babylonian magic proclaims itself loudly in the great religious literature and highest temple ritual, Greek magic is barely mentioned in the older literature of Greece, plays no part at all in the hymns, and can only with difficulty be discovered as latent in the higher ritual. Again, Babylonian magic is essentially demoniac ; but we have no evidence suggesting that the pre-Homeric Greek was demon-ridden, or that demonology and exorcism were leading factors of his consciousness and practice : the earliest mythology does not suggest that he habitually imputed his physical or moral disorders to demons, nor does it convey any hint of the existence in the early society of that terrible functionary, the witch-finder, or of the institution of witch-trials.

Had Greek religion and mythology been deeply impregnated with Babylonian influences we should find it difficult to account for this momentous difference.

The same reflection is forced upon us when we observe that the Λόγος or Divine Word conceived as a cosmic power plays no part in the earliest Hellenic theology of which we have any cognisance (we are not here concerned with the later history of the concept) : nor can we find in the earliest Greek period the name of God exalted into the position of a divine creative force ;

[1] *Vide infra*, pp. 291–293.

although, as I have shown elsewhere, the earliest Hellene, as the later, was fully sensitive to the magico-divine efficacy of names.[1]

We may also gather something for our present purpose from a comparison between the cosmogony or cosmic myths of East and West. Of these it is only the Babylonian and Hebraic that can claim a great antiquity of record. What is reported of Phoenician belief concerning these matters is of late authority, Eusebios quoting from Sanchuniathon or Philo Byblios, and this is too much permeated with later elements to be useful here. As regards the Hellenic theory of the origin of the world and of man, putting aside a few scattered hints in the Homeric poems, we have Hesiod for our first and insufficient witness. If we can detect Babylonian influence in the Hesiodic system, we must not hastily conclude that this was already rife in the second millennium: on the other hand, if Hesiod seems to have escaped it, it is far less likely that it was strong upon the proto-Hellenes.

For early Babylonian cosmogony our main evidence is the epic poem of creation, preserved on tablets found in the library of King Assurbanipal, which elucidates, and in the main corroborates, the fragments of the story given by Berosos in the third century B.C. Our earliest record, then, is actually of the seventh century, but Assyriologists have given reasons for the view that the epic copied for Assurbanipal descends from a period as early as B.C. 2000; for part of it accords with an old Babylonian hymn that has been discovered.[2] The document is therefore ancient enough for the purposes of our comparison. It is well known through various

[1] *Evolution of Religion*, pp. 186, 187.
[2] Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], pp. 490, 491, 497.

publications, and can be read conveniently in the detailed exposition of King in his handbook on Babylonian religion.[1]

When we consider carefully the more significant features in this cosmogony, we are struck with its almost total unlikeness to anything that we can discover or surmise in early Hellenic thought. It is true that the Babylonian theory starts with the dogma that the earliest cosmic fact was the element of water. Apsu and Tiâmat are the first powers in an unordered universe, and these seem to be the personal forms of the upper and lower waters, the fresh and the salt. We find the parallel thought in Homer, who speaks of Okeanos as "the source of all things," [2] including even the gods. But the value of such a parallelism is of the slightest, for the vague theory of a watery origin of created things appears widely diffused in the myths of remote peoples, for instance, North-American Indians, Aztecs, the Vedic Aryans, and there is a glimmer of it in the old Norse.[3] No conclusion, then, can be drawn from so slight a coincidence. If we know anything of the cosmogony of the pre-Homeric society we know it from Hesiod, for Homer himself shows no interest and makes no revelation on the subject. With certain reservations and after careful criticism we may be able to regard some parts of the Hesiodic statement as reflecting the thought of an age anterior to Homer's. Therefore it is of some present value to observe how little of characteristically Babylonian speculation appears in the Hesiodic Theogony or

[1] Pp. 52–100 ; cf. Pinches, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, p. 30, etc. ; Zimmern, *op. cit.*, 488–506.

[2] *Il.*, 14, 246, 302.

[3] *E.g.*, *vide* A. Lang, *Myth Ritual and Religion*, pp. 182, 198, 203 ; cf. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology*, pp. 13, 14 ; Golther, *Handbuch der German. Mythologie*, pp. 512–514.

Works and Days. Both systems agree with each other, and—it may be said—with all theogonies and religious cosmogonies, in regarding the primeval creative forces as personal powers who work either by the method of sexual generation or through mechanical processes of creation: the first of these methods, which though mythical in form has more affinity with organic science, is predominant over the other in the Hesiodic narrative. But the personal powers are different in the two systems. In the Babylonian the greatest of the primeval dynasts is Tiâmat, the sea, the mother of the gods and also of all monsters: in the Hesiodic it is Gaia, the Earth-mother, who does not appear at all in the Eastern cosmogony, but who claimed this position in the Hellenic through her deep-seated influence in the ancient religion. We note also that the Babylonian Sea is decidedly evil, the aboriginal foe of the gods of light, a conception alien to ordinary Hellenic thought. Again, the Babylonian creation of an ordered cosmos is a result of the great struggle between Marduk and Tiâmat, the power of light and the sovereign of chaos: it is preceded by hate and terror. In the Hellenic account the generation of the heavens, the mountains, the sea, and the early dynasty of Titan-powers is peaceful and is stimulated by the power of love, Eros, who has his obvious double in the Kāma or principle of desire in a cosmogonic hymn of the Rig-Veda, but is not mentioned by the Babylonian poet. (Nor does it concern us for the moment that this Eros is in respect of mere literary tradition post-Homeric: we may surmise at least that he was a pre-Homeric power in Boeotia.) Again, when we come to the theomachy in Hesiod, as an event it has no cosmogonic value at all: it has the air merely of a dynastic struggle between elder and younger divinities,

and the myth may really have arisen in part from the religious history of a shifting of cults corresponding to a shifting of population : nor are the Titans more representative of evil or of a lower order of things than the Olympian deities ; and cosmic creation, so far as Hesiod treats of it at all, seems over before the struggle begins. On the other hand, after Marduk has destroyed Tiâmat he constructs his cosmos out of her limbs, and then proceeds to assign their various stations to the great gods, his compeers. Thus the struggle of the god with the principle of disorder has a cosmic significance which is not expressed in the Titanomachy. The curious conception also that the universe was compacted out of the dismembered limbs of a divine personage, which reminds us of the Vedic story of the giant Purusa [1] and of the Norse legend of Ymir, is not clearly discoverable in Hellenic mythology : for the Hesiodic myth of the forms and growths that spring from the blood of the mutilated Ouranos is no real parallel. And there is another trait in the Babylonian theory of a world-conflict that distinguishes it from the Hellenic myths of a Titanomachy or Gigantomachy ; it was sometimes regarded not as a single event, finished with once for all, but as a struggle liable to be repeated at certain periods.[2] On the other hand, Hesiod's narrative of the oppression of Gaia's children by Ouranos and the outrage inflicted on him by Kronos has its parallels in Maori and savage legend,[3] but none in Mesopotamian, so far as our knowledge goes at present.

A different Babylonian mythological text from the library of Assurbanipal speaks of another battle waged

[1] Macdonell, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 13.
[2] Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 497.
[3] *Vide* A. Lang, *Myth Ritual and Religion*, ii. pp. 29, 30.

by Marduk against Labbu, a male monster imagined mainly as a huge snake; and Marduk is described as descending to the conflict in clouds and lightning:[1] the legend has no obvious significance for cosmogony, for it places the event after the creation of the world and of men and cities. But it has this interest for us, that it may be the prototype for the legend of Zeus' struggle with Typhoeus, which is known to Homer, and which he places in the country of the Arimoi, regarded by many of the ancient interpreters, including Pindar, as Cilicia.[2] Now, the story of this conflict in Hesiod's theogony has no connections with the Titanomachy or the Gigantomachy, nor is it there linked by any device to any known Hellenic myth; nor is it derived, like the legend of Apollo and Python, from genuine Hellenic cult-history. It has an alien air and character. Typhoeus is on the whole regarded as a monstrous dragon, but one of his voices is that of a lion, another that of a bull. The resemblance of this narrative to the Babylonian one just mentioned is striking, and becomes all the more salient when we compare certain Babylonian cylinders which picture Marduk in combat with a monster, sometimes of serpent form, sometimes with the body of a lion or a bull.[3] The Typhoeus-legend belongs also essentially to the Asia-Minor shores, and if Cilicia was really the country whence it came to the knowledge of the Homeric Greeks, it is a significant fact that it was just this corner of the Asia-Minor coast that felt the arms of the earliest Assyrian conquerors in the fourteenth century B.C.; and it is just such myths that travel fast and far.

[1] Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 498; cf. King, *op. cit.*, pp. 84–86.

[2] *Vide* Strab., p. 626; others placed it in the volcanic region of Lydia (*ib.*, p. 579).

[3] Cf. King, *op. cit.*, pp. 101, 102 (plate); and Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], pp. 502 503, n. 2.

If the hypothesis of Assyrian origin is reasonable here, many will regard it as still more reasonable in regard to the Deukalion flood-story. Certain details in it remind us, no doubt, of the Babylonian flood-myth ; and as this latter was far diffused through Asia Minor, it was quite easy for it to wander across the Aegean and touch Hellas. But if it did, we have no indication that it reached the Hellenes in the early period with which we are here concerned, as Hesiod is our earliest authority for it.

The last theme of high interest in the cosmogonic theory of ancient Babylonia is the creation of man. According to Berosos, this momentous act was attributed to Bel, who, after the victory over Chaos, commanded one of the gods to cut off his head and to make men and animals out of earth mixed with his own blood, and this story is partly corroborated by an old cuneiform text that is derived from the beginning of the second millennium.[1] This interesting theory was not universally accepted, for another and independent text ascribes the creation of man to Marduk and a goddess called Aruru, simply as a mechanical act of power.[2] The idea implicit in the former account, of the blood-relationship of man to god, is of the greater potentiality for religious metaphysic, and a similar notion is found, developed into a high spiritual doctrine, in the later Orphic Zagreus-mystery. But there is no trace of it in genuine Hellenic thought or literature. We have no provedly early Greek version of the origin of man : only, in the *Works and Days*, we are told that the Immortals or Zeus made the men of the five ages, the third generation, out of ash-trees : it may be that the story of Prometheus

[1] Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 497.
[2] King, *op. cit.*, pp. 88–91 ; Zimmern, *op. cit.*, p. 498 (b).

forming them out of clay was known to Hesiod, as Lactantius Placidus attests;[1] in any case we may judge it to be of great antiquity on account of its wide vogue in the later period, and its occurrence in other primitive folklore. But nothing like it has as yet been found in the ἱερὸς λόγος of Mesopotamia.

Generally we may say that the Hesiodic cosmogony bears no significant resemblance to the Babylonian, and this negative fact makes against the theory of Mesopotamian influence upon pre-Homeric Hellas.

As a divine cosmogony implies some organic theory of the Universe, so the polytheisms that attempted such speculations would be confronted also with the problem of finding some principle of order by which they might regulate the relations of the various divinities, one to the other. We find such attempts in Mesopotamian religion. Certain deities are affiliated to others, Marduk to Ea, Nebo to Marduk, though such divine relationships are less clear and less insisted on than in Hellenic theology; and the grouping of divinities shifts according to the political vicissitudes of the peoples and cities. We may discern a tendency at times to use the triad as a unifying principle, giving us such trinities as Anu, Bel, Ea, or Sin, Shamash, Adad;[2] we have glimpses of a trinitarian cult in early Carthage,[3] and slight indications of it in the Minoan-Mycenaean pillar-ritual.[4] But I cannot find anything to suggest that among the cultured or uncultured Semites it was ever in the ancient period a powerful and constructive idea, able

[1] Ad Ov. *Metam.*, I, 34 (the authenticity of the Lactantius passage is doubted; *vide* Bapp in Roscher's *Lexikon*, iii. p. 3044).

[2] The first is specially Babylonian, the second in Esarhaddon's inscriptions (*vide* Jastrow, *op. cit.*, pp. 248, 249).

[3] "La Trinité Carthaginoise" in *Gazette Archéol.*, 1879–1880.

[4] Evans, in *Hell. Journ.*, 1901, p. 140.

to beget a living dogma that might capture the popular mind and spread and germinate in adjacent lands.[1] We have perhaps as much right to regard the number seven as a grouping principle of Babylonian polytheism, in the later period at least, when we find a group of seven high deities corresponding to the seven planets.[2] We might discover a Hittite trinity of Father, Mother, and Son if we concentrated our attention on the Boghaz-Keui reliefs; but the other Hittite evidence, both literary and monumental, gives no hint of this as a working idea in the religion. In fact, in most polytheisms of the Mediterranean type it is easy to discover trinities and easy to deceive oneself about them.

The human family reflected into the heavens naturally suggests the divine trio of Father, Mother, Child. And this may be found on the Asia-Minor shore and in Hellas. It would be more important if we could discover the worship of this triad in an indissoluble union from which the mystic idea of a triune godhead might arise. This is not discernible clearly in the older period on either side of the Aegean. The cult-complex of Zeus, Semele, and Dionysos does not belong to ancient Hellas and is rare at any period; that of Hades Demeter Kore is occasionally found in cults of doubtful antiquity, but usually the mother and daughter were worshipped without the male deity. The Homeric triad so often invoked in adjurations of Zeus, Athena, and Apollo, which misled Mr. Gladstone, is due probably to the exigencies of hexameter verse, and is not guaranteed by genuine cult. No divine triad in Hellas can be proved to have descended from the earliest period of

[1] *Vide*, however, Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 419, who tries to derive the Christian Trinity ultimately from Babylon.

[2] *Vide* Roscher, *Lexikon*, iii. p. 67, *s.v.* "Nebo."

Greek religion, except probably that of the Charites at Orchomenos.[1] We have later evidence of a trinity of Zeus, Poseidon, and Hades, expressing the triad that Nature presents to us of sky, sea, and earth. But probably one of these figures is an emanation of Zeus himself; the sky-god having become "chthonian" in a very early period.[2] We cannot say, then, that the earliest period of Hellenic religion shows a trinitarian tendency; and if it were so, we could not impute it to early Mesopotamian influence, for the idea of a trinity does not appear in the Eastern religion with such force and strength as to be likely to travel far.

As for the artificial group of the twelve Olympians, we should certainly have been tempted to connect this with Babylonian lore, the number twelve being of importance in astronomical numeration; only that the divine group of twelve does not happen to occur in Babylonian religious records at all. Nor does the complex cult of the Δώδεκα θεοί appear to belong to the earliest period of Greek religion.[3] And so far I have been able to discern nothing that justifies the suggestion[4] that the principle of unification or divine grouping in early Mediterranean polytheism came from Babylon.

A severely organised polytheism with one chief divinity, to whom all the others were in definite degrees subordinated, might evolve a monotheism. And in Babylonian literature we can mark certain tendencies making in this direction. One tablet contains an inscription proclaiming all the high gods to be forms of Marduk, Nergal the Marduk of war, Nebo the Marduk

[1] Vide *Cults*, v. p. 431.
[2] *Vide op. cit.*, vol. iii. pp. 284–285.
[3] *Vide op. cit.*, vol. i. pp. 84, 85.
[4] Made by Weber in *Arabien vor dem Islam*, p. 19.

of land.[1] That all the deities were mere forms or emanations of the Eternal might have been an esoteric doctrine of certain gifted minds, though it was difficult thus to explain away and to de-individualise the powerful self-asserting personality of Ishtar, for an attractive goddess-cult is always a strong obstacle to pure monotheism. A particular king might wish at times to exalt the cult of a particular god into a monotheistic ideal; the attempt was seriously made in Egypt and failed. It may have been seriously intended by King Rammannirari III. (B.C. 811–782), who introduced the cult of Nebo, always one of the most spiritual figures of the Pantheon, into Kelach; hence comes a long inscription on two statues now in the British Museum, set up by a governor in honour of the king, which is valuable for its ethical import, and still more interesting for its monotheistic exhortation at the close:[2] "Oh man, yet to be born, believe in Nebo, and trust in no other gods but him." Here is the seed that might have been developed by a powerful prophet into pure monotheism. But the ecstatic Babylonian votary is always falling into contradiction, for in the earlier part of this hymn he has called Nebo, "The beloved of Bel, the Lord of Lords." What, then, must the congregation think of Bel?

In Greek religion the germs of monotheistic thought were still weaker and still less likely to fructify. The earliest Hellenic tribes had already certain deities in common, and the leading stocks at least must have regarded Zeus as the supreme god. They must have also adopted many indigenous deities that they found powerful in their new homes, whose cult could not be

[1] *Vide* Pinches, *op. cit.*, p. 118; Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 203, n. 1.

[2] Quoted by Jeremias in his article on "Nebo" in Roscher, *Lexikon*, iii. p. 49.

uprooted even if they wished to do so. We must therefore imagine the pre-Homeric societies as maintaining a complex polytheism, with some principle of divine hierarchy struggling to assert itself. Homer, if it is ever true to speak of him as preaching, seems certainly the preacher of the supremacy of Zeus. How far this idea was accepted in the various localities of cult we have not sufficient material for deciding: much would depend on the degree to which the individuals were penetrated by the higher literature, which from Homer onwards proclaimed the same religious tenet.[1] We can at the same time be sure that in many localities the countryfolk would be more under the spell of some ancient deity of the place than of the sky-father of the Aryan Hellenes. And though his cult was high placed by the progressive races, and his personality powerfully pervading in the realm of nature and human society, so that the higher thinkers entered on a track of speculation that leads to monotheism, the masses did not and could not follow them, having, in fact, the contrary bias. The popular polytheism showed itself most tenacious of divine personalities; and owing partly to the sacred power of divine names, the various titles of a single divinity tend occasionally to engender distinct divine entities. I have also already indicated that art contributed to the same effect through multiplying idols. So far, then, from displaying monotheistic potentialities, Greek polytheism, from the pre-Homeric period we may suspect, and certainly after the Homeric age, tended to become more polytheistic.

[1] It is interesting to note the cult of the supreme god under the title of Μέγιστος in the remote district and city of Boulis, which excited the attention of Pausanias. Yet the men of Boulis were no monotheists, for they had temples of Artemis and Dionysos (Paus., 10, 37, 3; cf. my article in *Anthropological Essays presented to E. B. Tylor*, 1907, p. 92).

CHAPTER XI.

The Religious Temperament of the Eastern and Western Peoples.

A more interesting and fruitful ground of comparison is that which looks at the inward sentiment or psychic emotion of the different religions, at the personal emotional relation of the individual towards the godhead. As I observed before, a clear judgment on this question is only possible when the religious memorials of a people are numerous, varied, and personal, so that some of them at least may be regarded as the expression of the individual spirit. Even if the priest or the ritual dictates the expression, the pious and frequent votary may come to feel genuinely what is dictated to him. Hence we can gather direct testimony concerning the ancient Babylonian as we can of the ancient Hebrew religious temper and emotion; for though most of the Mesopotamian documents are concerned with the royal ceremonial, which does not usually reveal genuine personal feeling, yet in this case the royal inscriptions, whether religious narrative or liturgies or prayers, are unusually convincing as revelations of self. And besides these, we have many private hymns of penance and formulae of exorcism.

On the other hand, the ancient Western world and even historic Greece is singularly barren of this kind of religious testimony. We know much about the

State religion, but we have very few ritual formulae or public or private prayers. Our evidence is mainly the religious utterances of the higher poetry and literature and a few lyric hymns composed not for the solitary worshipper, but for common and tribal ritual-service. But we have also the mythology and the art and the general manifestations of the Hellenic spirit in other directions that enable us to conclude something concerning the religious psychology of the average man in the historic periods, and if we find this markedly different from that of the oriental, we shall find it hard to believe that the Babylonian spirit could have worked with any strong influence on the proto-Hellene.

A sympathetic study of the Babylonian-Assyrian documents impresses us with certain salient traits of the Mesopotamian religious spirit, some of which are common to other members of the great Semitic race. In a certain sense the Babylonian might be described as "ein Gott-betrunkener Mensch": as one possessed with the deepest consciousness of the ineffable greatness of God, of his own utter dependence, and at the same time of the close personal association between himself and the divinity. The ecstatic adoration we have marked in the liturgies is the result of a purely mental contemplation, will-power, and conviction, not of mystic initiation—for Babylonia had no mysteries—nor of orgiastic rites that could afford a physico-psychic stimulus. The individual seems to have regarded himself at times as the son, more often as the bond-slave, of his own tutelary divinity, who is angry when he sins and becomes favourable and a mediator in his behalf with other gods when he repents. In private letters of the time of Hammurabi we find the greeting, "May thy protecting god keep thy head well." A

common formula occurs in the incantations : " I, whose god is so-and-so, whose goddess is so-and-so."[1] In the penance-liturgy the priest speaks thus of the suppliant sinner, " Thy slave who bears the weight of thy wrath is covered with dust, . . . commend him to the god who created him."[2] With this we may compare certain phrases in a well-known penitential psalm, " Oh mighty Lady of the world, Queen of mankind. . . . His god and goddess in sorrow with him, cry out unto thee. . . . As a dove that moans I abound in sighings."[3] Abject remorse, tears and sighing, casting-down of the countenance, are part of the ritual that turns away the anger of the deity : hence fear of God and humility are recognised religious virtues. Merodach-Baladin of Babylon, in Sargon's inscription, is described as a fool " who did not fear the name of the Lord of Lords,"[4] and the idea is shaped in a general ethical maxim in another inscription, " He who does not fear his god is cut down like a reed."[5] " I love the fear of God," says Nebukadnezar in the record of his life.[6]

Such emotion and mental attitude is consonant with the Hebraic and with much of the modern religious temper ; but entirely out of harmony with all that we know of the Hellenic. The religious habit of the Hellene strikes us by comparison as sober, well-tempered, often genial, never ecstatically abject, but even—we may say—self-respecting. Tears for sin, lamentations

[1] *Vide* Langdon, *Transactions of Congress of Rel.*, 1908, i. p. 254.
[2] Zimmern, *Babylon. Hymn. u. Gebete*, p. 27.
[3] Langdon, *Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms*, p. 269.
[4] *Keilinschr. Bibl.* (Schrader), vol. ii. pt. ii. p. 69.
[5] iv. R. 3, 5 ; quoted by Jeremias in *Bab. Assyr. Vorstell. vom Leben nach dem Tode.*
[6] *Keilinschr. Bibl.*, iii. 2, p. 11.

and sighs, the countenance bowed to the ground, the body cleaving to the pavement, these are not part of his ritual; the wrath of God was felt as a communal more often than as an individual misfortune, and in any case was averted, not by emotional outpourings of the individual heart, but by ritual acts, solemn choruses, soothing sacrifice and songs, or by special piacular lustrations that wiped off the taint of sin. Tears are never mentioned,[1] except indirectly in the fictitious lamentations for some buried hero, annually and ceremoniously lamented, such as Achilles. Nor can we find in earlier Hellenic ethic the clear recognition of fear and humility among the religious virtues,[2] while both are paraded in the inscriptions of the later Babylonian kings, even in those that reveal a monstrous excess of pride.[3] The Hellenic god might punish the haughty and high-minded, he did not love the grovelling, but rather the man of moderate life, tone, and act. Such is God for the civic religion of the free man; while the Babylonian liturgy reflects the despotic society. The Hellene, for instance, does not try to win for himself the favour of the divinity by calling himself his slave. And the common phrase found on the Greek Christian tombs, *ὁ δοῦλος τοῦ Θεοῦ*, has passed into Christianity from Semitic sources.[4] This single fact illustrates, perhaps better than any other,

[1] In Aesch. *Agam.*, l. 70, the words *οὔτε δακρύων* are spurious, as I have argued in *Class. Review*, 1897, p. 293.

[2] We might perhaps infer their recognition from the occasional use of the word *δεισιδαίμων* in a partly good sense, *e.g.* Aristot. *Pol.*, 5, 11, 25; Xen. *Ages.*, 11, 8; but its bad sense is more emphasised by Theophrastos in his "Characters."

[3] Nebukadnezar (of all people) calls himself more than once "the humble, the submissive," *e.g. Keilinschr. Bibl.*, iii. p. 63.

[4] We find the phrase *δοῦλος ὑμέτερος* also in the Greek magic papyri, but these are charged with the Oriental spirit; Kenyon, *Greek Pap.*, i. p. 108, ll. 745–6.

the different temper of the old Oriental and old European religions; and there is a curious example of it in the bilingual Graeco-Phoenician inscription found in Malta,[1] commemorating a dedication to Melkarth or to Herakles Ἀρχηγέτης: the Phoenicians recommend themselves to the god as "thy slaves," the Greeks use neither this nor any other title of subservient flattery. In this connection it is well to note the significance of marking the body of the worshipper by branding, cutting, or tattooing with some sign that consecrated him as slave or familiar follower to the divinity. The practice, which may have been of great antiquity, though the evidence is not earlier than the sixth century B.C., was in vogue in Syria, Phrygia, and in early Israel, and was adopted by some Christian enthusiasts, but no proof of it has yet been adduced from Mesopotamia. It was essentially un-Hellenic, but was apparently followed by some of the Dionysiac thiasoi as a Thracian tradition.[2]

In fact, it is only in the latest periods that we find in Hellas an individual personal religion approaching the Babylonian in intensity. The older cult was communal and tribal rather than personal; even the household gods, such as Zeus Κτήσιος and Ἑρκεῖος, the gods of the closet and storehouse, the hearth-goddess, were shared by the householder in common with the nearest circle of kindred. These cults were partly utilitarian, and the moral emotion that they quickened was the emotion of kinship: they do not appear to have inspired a high personal and emotional faith and trust. Nor usually had the average Hellene of the

[1] *C. I. Sem.*, I, No. 122.

[2] These facts are collected and exposed in a valuable article by Perdrizet in *Archiv. für Relig. Wissensch.*, 1911, pp. 54–129; cf. *Revue des Études anciennes*, 1910, pp. 236–237; *Hell. Journ.*, 1888, pl. vi.

earlier period the conception of a personal tutelary divinity who brought him to life, and watched over his course, preserving, rebuking, and interceding for him. The Babylonian fancy of the great king sitting in infancy on the lap of the goddess and drinking milk from her breasts would not commend itself to the religious sense in Greece.

In Mesopotamia and in the other Semitic communities the fashion of naming a child after the high god or goddess was very common—commoner I am inclined to think than in Hellas, though in the latter country such names as Demetrios, Apollodoros, Zenon, Diogenes, point to the same religious impulse; but they appear to have arisen only in the later period. The Hellenic language did not admit, and Hellenic thought would not have approved of, those mystic divine names, which express as in a sacred text some quality or action of the divinity, such as we find in the Bible ("the Lord will provide"), and in pre-Islamitic inscriptions of Arabia, Ili-kariba, "My God hath blessed"; Ili-azza, "My God is mighty"; Ili-padaja, "My God hath redeemed."[1] Such names served as spells for the protection of the child, and are speaking illustrations of the close personal dependence of the individual upon the god.

This is also illustrated by another fashion, possibly ancient, of Semitic religious nomenclature: not only was the individual frequently named after the deity, but the deity might sometimes receive as a cult-title the name of the individual. Of this practice among the polytheistic Semites the only examples of which I am aware come from a late period and from the region of Palmyra: Greek inscriptions of the late Imperial era give such curious forms as Θεὸς Ἀὐμοῦ, Θεὸς

[1] *Vide* O. Weber, *Arabien vor dem Islam*, p. 21.

Οὐασεάθου, Θεὸς Ἀμέρου:[1] and these descriptive names in the genitive must designate the principal worshipper or founder of the cult; they are mostly un-Greek, as the religious custom certainly is, which is illustrated by such ancient Biblical expressions as "the God of Abraham," "the God of Jacob." We may find an example of the same point of view in the Phrygian title of Μὴν Φαρνάκου in Pontus, if we take the most probable explanation, namely, that it is derived from the Persian Pharnakes, the founder of the cult;[2] and again in a Carian dedication to Zeus Panamaros Ἀργύρου, as Ἄργυρος is found in the same neighbourhood as the name of a living man.[3]

The only parallel that Hellenic religion offers is the doubtful one, Athena Αἰαντίς, whose temple is recorded at Megara:[4] it may be that the goddess took her title from the hero because his grave was once associated with the temple. In any case, it is not so striking that the mythic hero should stand in this intimate relation with the deity as that the living individual should.

The ecstatic and self-prostrating adoration of divinity which is characteristic of the Babylonian temper might manifest itself at times in that excess of sentiment that we call sentimentality: we catch this tone now and again in the childlike entreaties with which the supplicator appeals to the deity as his father or mother; in the poetic pathos of the hymns to Tammuz, which sometimes remind us of the sentimentality

[1] Dittenberg, *Orient. Graec. Inscr.*, 619 (=Lebas-Waddington, *Inscr.*, iii. 2393); the reading here is Θεὸν Αὐμόν, probably a mistake for Αὐμοῦ; cf. Lebas-Wadd., 2395 and 2455.

[2] *Vide* Roscher's *Lexikon*, ii. p. 2752.

[3] *Vide ib.*, iii. p. 1496.

[4] *Cults*, vol. i., "Athena," R. 96*b* (Paus., 1, 42, 4); as regards "Apollo Sarpedonios" we are uncertain whether the title was not merely local-geographical.

of some of our modern hymns: he is called "Lord of the tender voice and shining eyes"; "he of the dove-like voice."[1] Such language may be called "hypokoristic," to use a Greek phrase; it belongs to the feminine sentiment in religion, and we are familiar with it in our own service. No echo of it is heard in the older Greek religious literature nor in any record of Greek liturgy. We can, indeed, scarcely pronounce on the question as to the tone to which primitive Greek wailing-services were attuned. We have only a few hints of some simple ancient ritual of sorrow: the pre-Homeric Greek may have bewailed Linos and Hyakinthos, as we hear that the Elean women in a later period bewailed Achilles; but if, indeed, the fragment of a Linos-threnody that the Scholiast on Homer has preserved for us is really primitive,[2] it has some pathos, but much brightness and nothing of the Babylonian sentimentality. The spirit of the Greek religious lyric strikes us as always virile, and as likely to be unsympathetic with the violent and romantic expression of sorrow or with endearing ecstasy of appeal.

The other trait that should be considered here in the religious spirit of the Mesopotamian Semites is fanaticism, an emotional quality which often affords a useful basis of comparison between various religions. This religious phenomenon is best known by its deadly results; but in itself it is most difficult to define, as are other special moral terms that imply blame and are highly controversial. It is only found among those who feel their religion so deeply as to be relatively indifferent to other functions of life. We impute fanati-

[1] Langdon, *op. cit.*, pp. 309, 321; cf. the lines in the hymn, p. 335: "I am the child who upon the flood was cast out—Damu, who on the flood was cast out, the anointed one who on the flood was cast out."

[2] Bergk's *Lyr. Graec.*, iii. p. 654.

cism when the tension of religious feeling destroys the moral equilibrium or stunts development of other parts of our nature, or prompts to acts which, but for this morbid influence, would excite moral indignation. It may display itself in the artistic and intellectual sphere, as by iconoclasm or the suppression of arts and sciences ; or in the discipline of individual life, as by over-ascetic self-mortification. Its coarsest and most usual manifestation is in war and the destruction of peoples of alien creed. A war or a slaughter is called fanatical, if its leading motive is the extermination of a rival religion, not for the sake of morality or civilisation, but as an act in itself acceptable to one's own jealous god. The ascetic type of fanaticism is specially a product of the Far East : the murderous type is peculiar to the Semitic spirit, when unchastened by a high ethical sympathy or a sensitive humanism ; for the chief record of it is in the pages of the history of Israel, Islam, and Christianity, so far as this last religion has been in bondage to certain Semitic influence. It is a question of interest whether we find fanaticism of this type in the Mesopotamian area and in the ancient polytheistic communities of the Western Semites. We might expect to find it because of the intensity of the religious spirit that seems to have been a common inheritance of all these stocks. The more fervent the worship, the more is the likelihood that the dangerous idea of a " jealous " god will emerge, especially when races are living under the illusion of the " fallacy of names." By a fatal logic of devotion, the jealous god may be thought to favour or ordain the destruction of those who worship the deity under other names, which meant, for the old world, other gods. Only this must be carefully distinguished from the other more innocent

idea, proper to all tribal religions, that the deity of the tribe, like a good citizen, will desire victory for his people's arms.

As regards Mesopotamia, in his *History of Ancient Religions* Tiele finds in Assyrian history the same traces of murderous fanaticism as in Israelitish.[1] So far as I have been able as yet to collect the evidence, this statement appears to contain some exaggeration. For I have not found any record of a war that an Assyrian or Babylonian ruler undertakes at the command of a "jealous god" against a people whose only offence is an alien worship. The motives for a war appear to be of the ordinary human and secular kind; Palestine, for instance, is attacked, not because Marduk or Asshur personally hates Jahwé, but because the country holds the key of the route to Egypt. Such Biblical narratives as the destruction of Jericho, Ai, and the Amalekites find no real parallel in Mesopotamian chronicles. Yet in these also the temper of homicidal religion is strong enough to be dangerous. Neither in the Babylonian nor in the Assyrian divinities is there any spirit of mercy to the conquered. On that early relief of Annabanini of the third millennium B.C., the goddess leads to the king the captives by a hook in their noses to work his will upon them.[2] And in the later records of the great Assyrian Empire, the deities appear prominently as motive forces, and the most cruel treatment of captives is regarded as acceptable to them. The worst example that Tiele quotes is the great inscription of Assurbanipal, who, after speaking of himself as "the Compassionate, the King who cherishes no grudge,"[3] naïvely proceeds to narrate how he tore out the tongues

[1] Pp. 222–223.
[2] *Vide supra*, p. 42.
[3] *Keilinschr. Bibl.*, ii. p. 191.

of the rebels of Babylon, hewed their flesh into small pieces, and flung it to the dogs, swine, and vultures; and "after I had performed these acts, I softened the hearts of the Great Gods, my Lords." But the lines that follow suggest that what "softened their hearts" was not so much the tortures and massacres, which they might approve of without directly commanding, but the religious measures that Assurbanipal immediately undertook for the purification of Babylon, whose temples had been polluted with corpses. Again, Tiglath-Pileser III. speaks of himself as the Mighty One "who in the service of Asshur broke in pieces like a potter's vessel all those who were not submissive to the will of his god";[1] and a little later, Sargon recounts how "Merodach-Baladin, King of the Chaldaeans, . . . who did not fear the name of the Lord of Lords . . . broke the statues of the great gods and refused his present to me."[2] Yet it would be a misunderstanding to speak of these, as Tiele does, as if they were wars of religion, like the Crusades or the war against the Albigenses. Asshur sends the king to the war invariably, but rather for the sake of the king's profit and glory than for the propagation of Asshur's religion; for his enemies are very frequently of the same religion as himself. The above phrases must be understood probably in a political sense rather than a religious; the god and the king are so intimately associated that whoever insults or injures one, insults or injures the other. We may suspect that Merodach-Baladin's breach of the divine statutes consisted in his omitting to send his usual tribute to Sargon. When two men had spoken scornfully of the gods of Assurbanipal, both the king and the gods would wish to avenge the insult:[3] it was natural, therefore, for Assurbanipal

[1] *Keil. Bibl.*, ii. p. 11. [2] *Ib.*, p. 69. [3] *Ib.*, p. 257.

to torture and flay them. In warring against an alien people, the king is warring against alien gods; therefore if he sacks the alien city he may capture and take away, or—more rarely—destroy, the city's gods. Thus Asarhaddon had taken away the idols of Hazailu, King of Arabia, and of Laili, King of Iadi; but when these kings had made submission and won his favour he returned to them the holy images, having first inscribed them with his own ideogram and a mark of the might of Asshur:[1] thus the gods, having the brandmark of the great king and the imperial deity, become tributary divinities. Or if he wished to wipe a people out, the Assyrian conqueror might break their idols to dust. Thus Assurbanipal broke in pieces the gods of the Elamites—the most deadly foes of Babylon—and thereby "eased the heart of the Lord of Lords."[2] But many of the Elamite deities he led away; and of one of them he speaks in terms of reverence, Sašinak, the god of destiny, "who dwells in hidden places, whose working no one sees."[3] It is more difficult to understand why Sanherib should boast to have destroyed the deities of Babylon after his capture of the city; for the leading Babylonian divinities certainly belonged to the Assyrian Pantheon.

The evidence here quoted justifies us in attributing fanaticism to the religious temper of Babylonia and Assyria; not because the wars were evangelising, undertaken in the service of religion, but because the savage cruelty that accompanied them is deemed, as it is in the early Hebraic view, acceptable to the national gods. The idea of divine mercy is potent in the liturgies; but neither morality nor religion would appear to have inculcated any mercy towards the alien foe; and this lack

[1] *Keil. Bibl.*, ii. pp. 133–134. [2] *Ib.*, pp. 203, 207. [3] *Ib.*, p. 205.

of moral sympathy may be termed a passive fanaticism. The same fanatic temper might be traced in the savagery of the punishments for offences against the State-religion, and was reflected also at times in the legal code.[1]

From other polytheistic Semitic communities we have no record, so far as I am aware, that bears on the phenomenon that we are considering, except the famous Moabite Stone, of which the style is in this respect strikingly Biblical. Mesha regards himself as sent by his god Chĕmosh to take Nebo from Israel, and he explains why he slaughtered all within the walls, man, woman, and child, "for I had devoted it to Chĕmosh." Fanaticism does not so naturally belong to polytheism as to monotheism; yet it seems that at times the polytheistic Semites could be as prone to this vice of the religious temper as the monotheistic Israelites.

Speaking generally, and in comparison with the ancient Semitic and the mediaeval and even later spirit of Europe, we must pronounce the Hellenic temperament of the earlier and classical period as wholly innocent of fanaticism. The history of Hellas is not stained by any "war of religion"; and no religious hierarchy in Hellas ever possessed the power or displayed the will to suppress art or persecute science and thought. It might occasionally happen that individuals were in danger of punishment if they insulted or openly flouted the civic worship or introduced new deities; but that the State should protect itself thus is not fanaticism. The least tolerant of cities was the enlightened Athens. But her record in this matter is a spotless page com-

[1] We note the indication of a cruel human sacrifice—consecration of a child to a god or goddess by fire—as a legal punishment for reopening adjudicated causes (Johns, *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws*, etc., p. 95).

pared with the history of any later European State. Hellas owed this happy immunity to her cooler religious temper, to the equilibrium of the other life-forces within her, and to her comparative freedom from dark and cruel superstitious fears.

It is specially in regard to such salient features of the religious temperament as we have been considering that the early Hellene asserted his spiritual independence of the East.

CHAPTER XII.

Eschatologic Ideas of East and West.

Religions are often found to differ fundamentally in their conceptions of the fate of the departed spirit of man, and in the prominence and importance they assign to the posthumous life. There is, in fact, a group of religions which we might term "other-worldly," because certain dogmas concerning the world after death are made the basis on which their aspirations and ideals of conduct are constructed; to this group belong Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, and the old Egyptian creed. There are other religions, also of a highly developed type, in which eschatologic doctrine plays no forcible or constructive part either in the theology or in the ethics. Such were the Mesopotamian, primitive Judaism, and the early Hellenic.

Our question concerning the evidences in the second millennium of Mesopotamian influences on the Western Aegean demands, then, at least a brief comparison of the Sumerian-Babylonian, and Hellenic eschatology. Our knowledge of the former is derived from certain epic poems, the Epic of Gilgamesh, "The Descent of Ishtar," and the poem dealing with the marriage of Nergal and Erishkigal, the Queen of the dead; secondly, from a few inscriptions of various periods, alluding to burial or the status of the dead; thirdly, and this is the most important source, from the recent excavations

of certain "necropoleis." [1] The Hellenic facts have been sufficiently set forth for the present purpose in a former series of lectures.

In the picture of the lower world presented by the two literatures, a certain general agreement is discoverable, but none closer than they reveal with the conceptions of other peoples. Both accept as an undoubted fact the continued existence of the soul after death, and both imagine this existence as shadowy, profitless, and gloomy. Both also vaguely locate the abode of the soul under the earth, with a downward entrance somewhere in the west.[2] In both we find the idea of a nether river to be crossed, or "the waters of death"; [3] of a porter at the gates of "hell," and of a god and goddess as rulers of the lower world; while the mountain of the Babylonian underworld on which the gods were supposed to have been born was unknown to Hellenic mythology.[4] Such coincidences are no criterion of a common origin of belief; for these traits recur in the death-lore of many and widely scattered races.

As against them, we must take into account certain salient differences. The lot of the departed in the Babylonian epic account appears drearier even than

[1] *Vide* Dr. Langdon's paper on "Babylonian Eschatology," in *Essays in Modern Theology* (papers offered to Professor Briggs, 1911), p. 139.

[2] *Vide* Jeremias, *Hölle und Paradies*, p. 30; cf. King, *Bab. Rel.*, p. 46—formula for laying a troubled and dangerous ghost—"let him depart into the west; to Nedu, the Chief Porter of the Underworld, I consign him." The west was suggested to the Hellene because of the natural associations of the setting sun; to the Babylonian, perhaps, according to Jeremias, *op. cit.*, p. 19, because the desert west of Babylon was associated with death and demons.

[3] The "waters of death" figure in the Epic of Gilgamesh, *e.g.* King, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

[4] *Vide* inscr. of Sargon II. in *Keil. Bibl.*, ii. 2, pp. 75–77, 79: "Ea, Sin, Shamash, Nabu, Ramman, Ninib, and their benign spouses, who were rightfully born on Iharsaggalkurkurra, the Mountain of the Underworld."

in the Homeric, just as the Babylonian religious poetry inclines to the more sombre tones and the more violent pathos. The dead inhabit "the house wherein he who enters is excluded from the light, the place where dust is their bread, and mud their food. They behold not the light, they dwell in darkness, and are clothed, like birds, in a garment of feathers; and over door and bolt the dust is scattered." [1] This is more hopeless than the Homeric meadow of Asphodel, where the souls still pursue the shadow of their former interests, and some tidings of the earth may penetrate to give them joy. Also, the demoniac terrors of the lower world are more vividly presented in Babylonian than in Hellenic literature and art. The demons of disease that perform the bidding of Allatu, the Queen of Hell, are closely connected with the ghost-world; we learn from the formulae of exorcism that the haunting demon that destroyed a man's vital energies might be a wandering spectre. "O Shamash, a horrible spectre for many days hath fastened itself on my back, and will not loose its hold upon me. . . . he sendeth forth pollution, he maketh the hair of my head to stand up, he taketh the power from my body, he maketh my eyes to start out, he plagueth my back, he poisoneth my flesh, he plagueth my whole body . . . whether it be the spectre of my own family and kindred, or the spectre of one who was murdered, or whether it be the spectre of any other man that haunteth me." [2]

Now it is possible that the curse of the demon was powerful both in the earlier and later periods of ancient, as it is powerful to-day in modern, Greece; the demon might be a ghost or a *revenant*. And it has

[1] Passage in "The Descent of Ishtar," Jeremias, *op. cit.*, p. 20.
[2] King, *op. cit.*, pp. 45–46.

been the ambition of a small group of scholars in this country to prove that the higher literature and art of Greece, that reveals so fair and sane an imagination of the unseen world, is only a thin veil drawn over much that was grotesque and ghastly in the popular superstition. Even Homer reveals forms of terror in Hades; and we have ugly tales of demons sucking blood, and ravaging the land like the Ποινή of Megara. It is not necessary to labour this point. Probably every ancient race has been sorely tried at one time or other by the burden of demonology; even our hardy ancient kinsmen of Iceland had their vampires and strangling ghosts, that figure occasionally in their saga. But the great peoples of our Western civilisation are those who have struggled free from this obsession into the light of progressive secular life. Such also—we have the right to believe—was the early Greek. To draw the distinction too sharply between the cultured and the uncultured strata may be a source of fallacy, especially when it is ancient Hellas that we are dealing with, where the artist was usually a man of the people and the people certainly delighted in the work of their poets, and were strangely susceptible to the healing influences of music. If Greek poetry, then, and art strove to banish the ugliest forms of the demon-world, and thereby worked with purifying and tranquillising influence on the temperament, so much the better for the Greek peasant. It is probably wrong, therefore, to regard the average Hellene as a nightmare-ridden man. But we might dare to say this of the Babylonian; and his imaginary terrors were fostered by his religious liturgical poetry, and to some extent by his art. For most of his hymns are formulae of exorcisms, incantations against demons and spectres. But such liturgy played relatively a very small part in

Greek ritual; and this is one of the strongest facts that can be brought to witness against the theory of early Babylonian influence.

Yet both the Greek and the Babylonian feared the miasma of the dead. Ishtar's threats at the portal of Hell, a tremendous outburst of infernal poetry, is a strong witness to this feeling: "Thou warder, open thy door, open thy door that I may enter in. If thou openest not thy door that I may not enter, I will crash thy door into splinters, I will burst the bolt, I will splinter the threshold and tear up the wings of the door: I will lead forth the dead that they shall eat and drink: the dead shall keep company with the living." What lends part of its force to this great passage is the dreadful thought that the living should be haunted by the multitude of the ghosts that would pollute the living person and the light of day.

Shamash the sun-god is the natural enemy of ghosts, and is therefore appealed to in the incantation quoted just above to drive away the demon-spectres. He seems to stand here in the same relation of antipathy to the ghost-world as the "pure" Apollo stood for the Greek.

The mode and the place of burial will often throw light on the feelings of the living in regard to the departed. The peoples of the Minoan-Mycenaean culture interred their dead, Homeric society cremated them, while the recent excavations have revealed that both systems were in vogue side by side throughout an indefinite period in Mesopotamia;[1] and such being the facts, we cannot safely deduce from them any marked difference in spiritual beliefs. More illuminating is the fact that the pre-Homeric society in Greek lands appears generally to have buried its dead in or near their habita-

[1] *Vide* Langdon, *op. cit.*

tions, as if they desired the companionship of the spirits, agreeing in this respect with the people of Gezer in Palestine.[1] In Mesopotamia, though in very ancient times the dead were sometimes buried in temples, the fashion generally prevailed of establishing a necropolis outside the city, as was the rule also in post-Homeric Greece. This difference alone suggests that the fear of the ghost was less powerful in pre-Homeric Greece than in Mesopotamia.

It is clear, however, that the Babylonian, like the Hellene, desired at times to enter into communion with the departed family-ghost; for in Mesopotamia, as in Hellas, we have clear trace of "parentalia," communion-meals to which the ancestral spirits were invited to feast with the family. In the Babylonian phrase this was called "breaking bread with" the dead:[2] the parallel facts in Hellas are familiar to students.

Moreover, a certain general resemblance in the funeral ceremonies can be detected between the Eastern and Western peoples whom we are comparing. When we examine these, we discover that neither the Homeric nor the Babylonian epic-picture of the desolateness and futility of the life in Hades corresponded altogether with the popular faith as expressed in tomb-ritual. It is true to say of all races that burial customs and eschatological theory are never wholly harmonised by any coherent logic, and generally reveal discord between the dogma and the ritual. We can note this in ancient Hellas and among ourselves; and the discovery of Babylonian graves reveals it in Mesopotamia. The things found in these, toys for children, cosmetics for girls,[3]

[1] Cook, *Religion of Ancient Palestine*, p. 36.

[2] *Vide* Langdon, *op. cit.*

[3] *Vide* Prof. Margoliouth's article on "Ancestor-worship" in Hastings' *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics.*

show that the ideas so powerfully expressed in "The Descent of Ishtar" about the barrenness and nakedness of the land of the dead were either not universally admitted or not acted upon.

Those who equip the dead with some of the things that were of use and delight to the living must believe that the departed soul preserves a certain energy and power of enjoyment, though a gloomy poet among them may enlarge impressively on the emptiness of death. The unknown Assyrian king who describes in an inscription the sumptuous burial that he gave his father may not have been of the same mind as the poet of the Ishtar-epic concerning the laws of the Queen of Hell:

"Within the grave
The secret place
In kingly oil
I gently laid him.
The grave-stone
Marketh his resting-place.
With mighty bronze
I sealed its [entrance],
I protected it with an incantation.
Vessels of gold and silver,
Such as my father loved,
All the furniture that befitteth the grave,
The due right of his sovereignty,
I displayed before the Sun-God,
And beside the father who begat me,
I set them in the grave.
Gifts unto the princes,
Unto the spirits of the earth
And unto the gods who inhabit the grave,
I then presented."[1]

What is the meaning of the act of exposing the gold and silver vessels to the sun-god Shamash before placing them on the grave? Was it done to purify them by the aspect of the pure god and thus to fit them for the use

[1] King's translation in *Babyl. Relig.*, pp. 48–49. Cf. Jeremias, *Hölle u. Paradies*, p. 12.

of the glorified dead ? The evidence of the deification of kings has been collected above. But the ceremony in question is unique, as far as I am aware.

No doubt in ordinary Semitic burials there was great variety in the grave-offerings : in the graves of Gezer in Palestine, weapons, jewels, ostrich-eggs, seals, scarabs, amulets, small figures in human or animal form have been found.[1]

In these practices the primitive Hellene and Semite were on the same level, nor is it likely that either was the pupil of the other. One important difference, important at least for our purpose, we can mark, which is connected with the difference between Hellenic and Oriental climate. The Hellenic ghost might take water among his offerings, and the neglected soul might be pitied for being *ἄνυδρος*[2]; he might also eat his porridge in the Anthesteria ; but he preferred wine, and the offerings of blood—the *αἱμακουρία*—and especially the sacrifice of animals. And we may gather from the painting on the Phaistos sarcophagus that the blood-oblation to the dead was part of the pre-Hellenic ritual in Crete. The triple-libation, also, that Homer mentions, of wine, honey-mead, and water, and which the later Greeks retained, may be regarded as a Minoan tradition, for its great antiquity among the Aegean people is attested by the libation-table found by Sir Arthur Evans in the cave of Zeus on Mount Dickte. Here there is no trace of the teaching of the Babylonian priest : nor in the blood-offerings to the dead. For the Babylonian ghost, parched with thirst in the intolerable heat of Mesopotamia, craved not blood—which, as far as I know, is never mentioned in the description of his funeral-

[1] Cook, *The Religion of Ancient Palestine*, p. 35.

[2] *E.g.* Eur. *Troad.*, 1085, *σὺ μὲν φθίμενος ἀλαίνεις ἄθαπτος, ἄνυδρος.*

rites—but beer in the earliest period,[1] and in the later specially water. It is water that was supposed to make the deceased comparatively happy :

> " On a couch he lieth
> And drinketh pure water,
> The man who was slain in battle.
> His father and his mother [support] his head,
> And his wife [kneeleth] at his side." [2]

This is the lore that in the Epic of Gilgamesh is imparted to the hero by the ghost of his beloved Ea-bani, concerning the advantages of the man who gets due burial over him whose corpse is thrown out into the field, and whose soul wanders restlessly eating " the dregs of the vessel, the leavings of the feast, and that which is cast out upon the street."

The spirit's need of water has been an ancient tradition of Semitic grave-tendance. It is expressed on one of the cylinders of Gudea ; [3] and in the Curse of Hammurabi, which is a postscript to his code of laws, he swears that if a man breaks them " his spirit in the world below shall lack water." [4] Clay-cylinders in the museums of Paris and Berlin, that doubtless come from Mesopotamian graves, contain inscriptions expressing a blessing on the man who respects the dead, " may his departed spirit in the world below drink clear water." [5] The old idea survives in the belief of modern Islam that the soul of the dead yearns for nothing so much as that the rains or dews of heaven should fall refreshingly on the grave.

These simple differences in the oblations incline

[1] Langdon, *op. cit.*

[2] King, *op. cit.*, p. 176.

[3] Thureau-Dangin, *Les cylindres de Goudéa*, p. 57 : Les héros morts . . . leur bouche auprès d'une fontaine il plaça.

[4] Winckler, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[5] Jeremias, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

us to suppose that the primitive grave-ritual of Greece was developed independently of Babylon.

Again, in Greece this tendance of the spirits, in the case of the great ones of the community—the king, the hero, or the priest—was undoubtedly linked at an early period with apotheosis of the dead; and actual hero-cults and actual cults of ancestors became, as we have seen, a salient phenomenon of Greek religion.

But if this phenomenon is to be noted at all in the Babylonian, it certainly was not salient. We know that under certain circumstances the king might be worshipped in his lifetime and after, but we do not yet know that the departed head or ancestor of the family received actual cult; where this is asserted by modern scholars,[1] it may be that they have not paid sufficient attention to the important difference that has been defined between the tendance and the worship of the dead.[2] This at all events, on the evidence already placed before us, may be said: in respect of the frequency and force of hero-worship, Mesopotamia stands at the opposite pole to Greece, and in testing the question of primitive religious influences of East on West this fact must be weighed in the scale.

Evidence has been adduced pointing to an early Greek belief that the spirit of the departed ancestor might reincarnate itself in a descendant: a belief fairly common among savage peoples. I have not been able to find any indication of it in Babylonian records, nor am I aware of any trace of it among other Semitic peoples except, possibly, a late

[1] *E.g.* Peiser, *Sketch of Babylonian Society*, in the Smithsonian Institute, 1898, p. 586, speaks as if it was ancestor-worship that held the Babylonian family together.

[2] *Vide* my article on "Hero-worship" in *Hibbert Journal*, 1909, p. 417.

Phoenician inscription from the tomb of Eshmunazar, King of Sidon about B.C. 300: in the curse which he invokes against the violator of his tomb he prays that such a man's posterity may be rooted out: "May they have no root in the world below, nor fruit above, nor any bloom in the life under the sun." [1] These strange words contain the idea of a family-tree; the fruit and the bloom are the living members who are in the light of the sun: the root are the ancestral spirits. If the figure is to be interpreted literally, we must regard these latter as the source of the life that is on the earth, and the curse would mean "may the departed ancestors no longer have the power to reappear in the living." But we cannot feel sure how much sense we can press into the words.

So far, it appears that there was little or no communion according to Babylonian belief between the dead and the living, except at the family sacramental meal held after the funeral. Only the vexed and neglected soul of the unburied or the unhallowed dead returned to disturb the living. And perhaps at times the Babylonians, as the Israelites, resorted to "necromancy," the evocation of the dead by spells, so as to question them concerning the future. One evidence of this is the passage in the Epic of Gilgamesh, where the hero is able to evoke the spectre of his friend Eabani and question it. This was probably suggested by an actual practice, which is attested by such priestly titles as "he who leads up the dead," "he who questions the dead." [2] In ancient Greece we have the further evidence, which is lacking in the Babylonian record, of actual *νεκυομαντεῖα* or shrines where the dead were

[1] V. Landau, *Phönizische Inschr.*, p. 15.
[2] Jeremias, *Hölle u. Paradies*, p. 37.

consulted, and some of these may have descended from the pre-Homeric period; for the evocation of ghosts seems to have been specially practised in Arcadia, where so much primitive lore survived.

As regards the higher eschatology, it would seem that the Babylonian of the earlier period had not advanced even as far as the Homeric, possibly the pre-Homeric, Greek. For even in Homer's picture of Hades and the after-life [1] there already is found this important trait—certain notorious sinners are punished, certain privileged persons like Menelaos may be wafted to blessedness; while in Hesiod the idea is outspoken that many of the righteous and distinguished men of the past enjoy a blessed lot hereafter.[2] Moreover, this important dogma of posthumous punishments and rewards is not confined to the world of mythic fancy in the Homeric epic, to personages such as Tantalos, Tityos, Menelaos: the average man in the Homeric period might not hope for happiness after death; but if Homer is his spokesman he could fear special punishment, and the threat of it was already a moral force.

There are two striking passages in the *Iliad*, of which the importance for our present question is often ignored: in iii. 278 there is reference to the two divinities whom, with Aristarchus, we must interpret as Hades and Persephone, who punish oath-breakers after death: in xix. 259 the same function of executing judgment in the nether world upon the souls of the perjured is ascribed to the Erinyes: the context in both passages

[1] It would be idle for my purpose to distinguish between the so-called "Achaean" and "Pelasgian" elements in the Homeric Νέκυια; even if the latter ethnic term was of any present value for Greek religion.

[2] Hesiod, Ἔργ. 110–170 (the men of the golden and the silver ages and the heroes).

suggests that the poet is giving voice to a common popular belief.

And in regard to posthumous happiness, early Greece may have believed more than Homer reports. For who can determine how early this eschatologic hope came into the Eleusinian mysteries?

The "threats of hell and hopes of Paradise" were never wholly moralised even by later Greek thought; but here are the germs discernible in the earliest stage of the religion from which a higher moral teaching and a new moral force might emanate. But those who have tried to discover similar ideas in the records of Babylonian eschatology have hitherto entirely failed. Certain phrases and certain mythic data may be, and have been, pressed to support the theory that Babylonian religion and ethics were not without some belief in judgment and resurrection;[1] but it is overpressure, and the phrases may easily be misunderstood. No clear evidence points to Babylonian belief in posthumous judgment; the title "god of judgment" attached to Nergal might have merely a political significance. Again, "awakener of the dead" is a fairly frequent epithet of many divinities; but no context where it occurs suggests for it an eschatologic intention.[2] In the story of Adapa, much of which is recovered from the Tel-El-Amarna tablets, we find reference to the "Food of Life" and the "Water of Life,"[3] that the God of Heaven might have given to Adapa and thereby made him immortal; and in the story of Ishtar's descent, it is said that Allatu kept the waters of life in

[1] *Vide* Zimmern in *K.A.T.*[3], pp. 636–639; Jeremias, *Hölle u. Paradies*, p. 25; cf. his *Die Babyl. Assyr. Vorstellungen vom. Leben nach dem Tode.*

[2] *Vide supra*, p. 160.

[3] Zimmern, *op. cit.*, p. 520; King, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

hell wherewith Ishtar was restored. But nowhere as yet has any hint been found that these waters of life were available for any mortal man, and even Adapa, the son of a god, missed getting them. In the mythology of Babylon only one mortal, Utnapishtim, the Babylonian Noah, passes without death to some happy land and becomes immortal; after the deluge Bel spake thus: "Hitherto hath Utnapishtim been of mankind, but now let Utnapishtim be like unto the gods, even us, and let Utnapishtim dwell afar off at the mouth of the river." [1] Again, as the kings might be considered divine in life, there was no difficulty in supposing that they joined the company of the gods after death, as was supposed in Egypt. The prayers offered to deities of the lower world by the Assyrian king on behalf of his father, in the tablet quoted above, may be thus explained; the nether powers are entreated to offer no obstacles to his apotheosis. Other Semitic nations may have had the same belief concerning the future blessedness of the king; at least an inscription of King Panammu of North Syria, vassal of Tiglath-Pileser III., points to this, for his successor is urged to pray that "the soul of Panammu shall eat and drink with the good Adad." [2]

But no evidence has as yet been gathered that the ordinary Babylonian expected any such distinguished lot. Nor does it appear that prayers were ever offered for his soul, as they might be for the king's, and as they habitually were for the ordinary Athenian's in the Anthesteria. For the Babylonian, on the whole, the only distinction of lot between one person and another after death was between him whose ghost was well

[1] King, *op. cit.*, p. 138.
[2] Lagrange, *Études sur les religions sémitiques*, p. 493.

cared for by surviving relatives and him who died an outcast and was neglected. And this was no moral distinction, nor one that was likely to engender the belief in a righteous judgment. The duty to the dead was a family duty merely; nor can I find in the Mesopotamian records any indication of that tender regard of the alien dead which leads in Greece to a certain higher morality, and which informs Homer's pregnant phrase—"it is not righteous to vaunt oneself over the slain." We find Assyrian kings revenging themselves by mutilation and exposure of their enemies' corpses;[1] and Semitic ferocity and Hellenic *αἰδώς* are nowhere more vividly contrasted than in this matter.

Finally, there appears a difference in character between the Mesopotamian and the Hellenic deities who were concerned with the surveillance of the world below. In the religion of the Western people, the latter are as essentially concerned with life as with death; and Demeter, Kore-Persephone, Plouton, Zeus *Χθόνιος*, are benign divinities whose sombre character is only the reverse of the picture; there is a chance of development for a more hopeful creed when the dead are committed to the care of the gentle earth-goddess: and it was through this double aspect of Demeter-Kore that the eschatologic promise of the Greek mysteries was confirmed. But the Babylonian Queen of Hell, Allatu, is wholly repellent in character and aspect, nor do we find that she was worshipped at all; the only indication of a softer vein in her is the passage in "The Descent of Ishtar," which describes the sorrow of Allatu for the sufferings brought upon men through the departure of the goddess of life and love. Nergal, who is probably an usurper of the older supremacy of Allatu, has indeed a celestial character

[1] Cf. *Keil. Bibl.*, ii. 109; Jeremias, *Hölle u. Paradies*, pp. 13–14.

as the upper god of Kutha, but even in the upper world his nature was regarded as terrible and destructive. Only once or twice is the gentler Greek conception concerning the rulers of the lower world found in Babylonian literature.[1] Enmesharra—a name that may be a synonym for Nergal[2]—is hailed as "Lord of Earth, of the land from which none returns (Aralu), great Lord, without whom Ningirsu allows nothing to sprout in field and canal, no growth to bloom."[3] Tammuz himself also is once at least styled "the Lord of the lower world."[4] And if Ningirsu is another name of the underworld-god, which is possible, it is significant that in an old Babylonian document the cultivator of the soil is called "the servant of Ningirsu."[5] These isolated utterances, if they had penetrated the popular religious thought, might have engendered a softer and brighter sentiment concerning the world of death. But it is doubtful if they were potent enough to effect this.[6] If the gentle Tammuz had displaced Allatu and Nergal as the Lord of death, Babylonian eschatology might have had a different career. But it does not appear that he ever did. Deeply beloved as he was, he never reached the position of a high god either in heaven or the lower world.[7] Nor did his resurrection from the

[1] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, pp. 472–473.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 473.

[3] *Ib.*, p. 472.

[4] Zimmern in *Sitzungsber. d. Kön. Sächs. Gesell. Wiss.* 1907, "Sumerisch-Babylonische Tanzlieder," p. 220.

[5] *Vide* Jeremias in his article on "Nergal" in Roscher's *Lexikon*, iii. p. 251.

[6] It is doubtful if any argument can be based on the name Ningzu, occasionally found as the name of the consort of Ereshkigal (Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 637) and said to mean "Lord of Healing," in reference, probably, to the waters of life.

[7] Only in the story of Adapa he appears as one of the warders of the gates of heaven (Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 521).

dead evoke any faith, as far as we see at present, that might comfort the individual concerning his own lot. The personality and the rites of Attis, "the Phrygian shepherd," are closely akin to those of Tammuz, and may be partly of Babylonian origin: and from these were evolved a higher eschatologic theory that became a powerful religious force in later Paganism. On the other hand, in Babylonia the germs of higher religion in the Tammuz-ritual seem to have remained unquickened; possibly because they were not fostered and developed by any mystic society. For it is perhaps the most salient and significant difference between Hellenic and Mesopotamian religions that in the latter we have no trace of mysteries at all, while in the former not only were they a most potent force in the popular religion, but were the chief agents for developing the eschatologic faith.

This exposition of the Eastern and Western ideas concerning death and the ritual of the dead is merely a slight sketch of a great subject; but may serve the present purpose, the testing the question of early religious contact. We have noted much general resemblance, but only such as is found among various races of the world: on the other hand, certain striking differences, both in detail and general conception, that argue strongly against the theory of contact or borrowing in the second millennium. Nor can we discover in the earliest Greek mythology a single Mesopotamian name or myth associated with the lower world.[1]

[1] The story of Aphrodite descending into Hades to seek Adonis is much later than the period with which we are dealing. Nergal's descent to satisfy the wrath of Allatu and his subsequent marriage with her (Jeremias, *Hölle und Paradies*, p. 22) is a story of entirely different motive to the Rape of Kore.

CHAPTER XIII.

Babylonian, Anatolian, and Aegean Ritual.

A comparison of the forms observed in these regions, both in regard to the minute details and to the general underlying ideas, ought to contribute independent evidence to the solution of our question. The transmission of precise rules of ritual from one people to another, implies an intercourse of some duration, and more or less regulated; for while the name of a god or a single myth is volatile, and can be wafted down remote routes by an itinerant trader, or nomad, or hunter, the introduction of any organised ritual implies, as a rule, the presence of the missionary or the foreign priest. If, then, there is any evidence suggesting that Greece in its earliest period learnt its ritual from Babylon, the importance of this for the ethnic history of religion will be great indeed. Therefore it may seem that a detailed comparison of the Eastern and Western ritual is forced upon us at this point: but it would be premature to expect at present any finality in the result, because the Mesopotamian documents have only been very incompletely examined and published by the linguistic experts. However, the material that they have presented to us reveals certain salient facts of immediate value for our present purpose that cannot be wholly illusory, however much we may have to modify our interpretation of them in the light of future discovery.

As regards the Greek evidence, we are not without fairly ample testimony concerning the earliest period. The Homeric poems present us with the contemporary religious practices of at least a portion of the population whom we may conveniently call the Achaeans ; though we have no right to suppose that they give us a complete account even of those. Again, as ritual does not spring up in a day, and has a singular longevity, we may be sure that much of Homeric ritual is a tradition of the second millennium. Furthermore, we can supplement Homer by later testimony, of which the lateness of date is no argument against the primitiveness of the fashions that it may attest.

The first superficial comparison of Mesopotamian and Aegean ceremonies exhibits a general similarity in the mechanism of religion ; an established priesthood, temples, images, altars, prayers, sacrifice, religious music, holy days, consultation of the gods by methods of divination, a certain ceremonious tendance of the dead, these are common features of East and West. But if we were comparing Hellenic with Egyptian or Vedic, or even Mexican and Peruvian religion, we should be able to point to the same general agreement in externals, and many of these institutions are found broadcast over the modern world of savage society. It will be more important for the present question, if when we examine the Babylonian, Anatolian, and Hellenic ritual more minutely we discern salient differences, especially if these are found in certain organic centres of the religious life such as was the sacrifice. And we must first try to determine whether the Hellas of the pre-Homeric days already possessed all those religious institutions roughly enumerated above. We can deal to some extent with both these problems together.

The erection of temples is an important stage in the higher development of anthropomorphic religion. By the beginning of the second millennium B.C. this had become an immemorial tradition of Mesopotamia. But we are not sure at what period the other polytheistic Semites first evolved the architectural shrine, or how long they were content to use the natural cave as the house of a divinity, or a high place or "temenos" with altar or sacred pillar. The recent excavations at Gezer have revealed a glimpse into the religion of the prehistoric Semites of Canaan; and one shrine that seems nothing more than a row of sacred monoliths, but also another that has more the appearance of an elaborate building of a sacred character.[1] Of still greater antiquity was the shrine that Professor Petrie has discovered at Serabit in the Sinaitic peninsula, an original cave-temple complicated with the addition of porticoes and chambers, which he believes to have been devoted to a double cult, the Egyptian and Semitic.[2] At all events, we may conclude that before 1000 B.C. most of the more cultured Semitic communities in Asia Minor had come to house their divinities in more or less elaborated shrines.

As regards the other race that dominated the early period of Anatolian history, the Hittite, we have the priceless evidence of the Boghaz-Keui monuments: these reveal a complex temple hewn out of and into the rocky ravine with a "Holy of Holies" and what appears to be a sleeping-chamber for the god.[3] In Phrygia, the artificial shrine may have been late in supplanting the natural cavern or hole in the rock that was once the sufficient home of the cult of the great goddess.[4] From

[1] Cook, *The Religion of Ancient Palestine*, p. 17.

[2] *Researches in Sinai*, p. 72, etc., 186: he would carry back the foundation to the fourth millennium B.C.

[3] Vide *Arch. Anzeig.*, 1909, p. 498. [4] Vide *Cults*, iii. p. 299.

the coast of Asia Minor we have no evidence concerning the site of any ancient temple that carries us back to the early period with which we are dealing.[1] But the Homeric poems alone are sufficient proof that the Greeks, for whom they were composed, were beginning to be familiar with some architectural type of the deity's habitation. Apollo Smintheus already has his shrine and professional priest.[2] We hear of the temple and priestess of Athena in Troy,[3] of her shrine at Athens, which she shared with Erechtheus,[4] and the stone-threshold of Apollo at Delphi, that guarded already many treasures within it.[5] And we also know from the excavations of the last few years that the Aryan invaders from the North, the proto-Hellenes, would find temples on some at least of the sites of the Minoan culture. Crete has preserved certain shrines of the second millennium; but except the temple-cave on Dikte all of them so far are found to be merely domestic chapels in the king's palace, as though the king were personally responsible for the religion of the community: and so at Mycenae, Tiryns, and Athens, the oldest temples have been found on the foundations of "Mycenaean" palaces.[6] But the temples of Hera on the public hill of Argos and at Olympia are now dated near to 800 B.C.[7]

We have, then, proof sufficient of temple-construction in Greece and the Aegean islands before the period of Homer; and if we must have recourse to the theory that the peoples of the Minoan-Mycenaean culture took

[1] *Vide* Hogarth's evidence for the date of the earliest Artemision, *Excavations at Ephesus*, p. 244.

[2] *Il.*, i. 38. [3] *Ib.*, vi. 269, 299–300. [4] *Ib.*, ii. 550. [5] *Ib.*, ix. 405.

[6] *Vide* Stengel, *Griechische Sacral-Altertümer*, p. 17.

[7] Vide *Athen. Mittheil.*, 1911, pp. 27, 192.

their cue in this important evolution from some foreign civilisation, we should look to Egypt rather than to Assyria, as nearer and more closely in touch with early Crete.

We may mark here a difference between Eastern and Western thought in the religious conception of the temple. It was naturally regarded everywhere as sacrosanct, because permeated with the virtue of the divine presence; but Babylonia developed this idea with greater intensity of conviction than the Hellene, and actually deified the temple itself: the King Nabopolassar (*circ.* 625 B.C.) prays to it in such words as these, "Oh, temple, be gracious to the king thy restorer, and if Marduk enters thee in triumph, report my piety to him."[1] Such exaggeration is not found in Greek religion.[2]

As regards the emblem of divinity, the cult-object set up in the shrine to attract and to mark the presence of the deity, the Mesopotamian religion had, as we have seen, already evolved the eikon or image at some period considerably earlier than the second millennium, and the statue of the god or goddess had become an important factor of early ritual: only the emblem of Asshur remained aniconic.[3] Of equally early vogue was the image, whether human or theriomorphic, in Egyptian cult. Again, the early Hittite monuments reveal it clearly, though aniconic fetiches appear also on the reliefs of Boghaz-Keui. But it is probable that the Western Semites, and the tribes of Arabia before 1200 B.C.,

[1] *Vide* Jeremias in Roscher, *Lexikon*, ii. p. 2347, *s.v.* "Marduk."

[2] Something near to it would be found in the cult-phrase Ζεὺς Νᾶος of Dodona, which is a form commoner in the inscriptions than Ζεὺς Νάϊος, if, with M. Reinach (*Rev. Archéol.*, 1905, p. 97), we regarded this as the original title and interpreted it as "Zeus-Temple." But the interpretation is hazardous.

[3] A disk on the top of a pole, *vide* Jastrow, *Rel. Bab. Assyr.*, vol. i. p. 203.

and many of them for centuries after, preferred the aniconic emblem, the "Ashera" or post, or heap of stones or pillar, to the iconic statue; in fact, that temple idolatry in its developed forms as it presents itself in later Mediterranean history was alien to the old and genuine tradition of Semitic public worship. Iconic representations of divinities may indeed be found in Western Semitic regions, and some of these may be of great antiquity; such as the silver statue that Thutmose III. (of the fifteenth century B.C.) carried off from Megiddo and the Lebanon,[1] or the "Astarte"-plaques found on the site of Gezer.

But in Semitic communities of the earlier period such objects belonged rather to the private religion, and the public service centred round the sacred pillar or stone, as was the case at Mecca both before and after Islam arose: the evidence for this has been carefully given and estimated by Robertson Smith and Sir Arthur Evans.[2]

The same statement holds of many of the non-Semitic peoples of Western Anatolia; in Phrygia, for instance, the earliest emblem of Kybele was the rude pillar or cone-shaped stone, and this survived down to late times in the worship of the Anatolian goddess in some of the Greek cities on the Asiatic coast.

The recent discoveries in the regions of the Minoan and Mycenaean culture reveal the same phenomenon: the cults in this area of the Aegean in the second millennium were in the main aniconic, the favourite emblem being

[1] Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

[2] *Religion of the Semites*, pp. 185–195; "Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult," *Hell. Journ.*, 1901. It is interesting to note that Baitylos, a name derived from the Semitic description of the sacred stone as the "House of God," is given as the name of a divine king in the cosmogony of Philo Byblius, Müller, *Frag. Hist. Graec.*, iii. p. 567; cf. the baitylos with human head found at Tegea inscribed Διὸς Στορπάω (fifth century B.C.), "Zeus of the lightning" (*Eph. Arch.*, 1906, p. 64).

the pillar or tree-trunk, while in ancient Crete the axe and even the cross has been found.[1] Where the divinity appears in full human shape, as the snake-goddess in the chapel of the cross, the lion-guarded goddess or the god descending in the air above the pillar on the Minoan seals, these figures cannot, or need not, be interpreted as actual temple-idols. And students of the religion of classical Greece are familiar with the ample evidence of the aniconic tradition in the λίθοι ἀργοί, and the cone-shaped pillars and stocks that served as divine emblems in the later temples of Greece.[2]

Now the ethnic question concerning pillar-cult has been critically discussed by Sir Arthur Evans in his treatise mentioned above ; and the conclusion at which he arrives, that the striking parallelisms in Semitic Anatolian and Aegean ritual monuments are not to be explained as the result of direct borrowing from one or the other group of peoples, but as the abiding influence of a very early Mediterranean tradition, commends itself as the most reasonable. It is legitimate to maintain that the earliest Hellenes took over much of this aniconic cult from the earlier Minoan and Mycenaean civilisation ; but we must not overlook the fact that they also possessed their own, as a tradition derived from Central Europe.[3] The most futile hypothesis would be to assume that the early Greeks derived it from Babylon, where it is less in evidence than in any other Semitic community.[4]

[1] *Vide* Evans, *op. cit.*, and *Annual of British School*, 1908, 1909.

[2] *Vide* my *Cults*, i. pp. 13–18, 102 ; ii. pp. 520, 670 ; iv. pp. 4, 149, 307 ; v. pp. 7, 240, 444.

[3] For the evidence of a pillar-cult of Apollo Agyieus and Karneios coming from the north, vide *Cults*, vol. iv. pp. 307–308.

[4] The pillars known as " Kudurru," with emblems of the various divinities upon them, served merely as boundary-stones (*vide* Jastrow, *op. cit.*, i. p. 191 ; Hilprecht in *Babylonian Expedition of University of Pennsylvania*, vol. iv.).

The iconic impulse whereby the tree-trunk and pillar were gradually supplanted by the fully human statue was beginning to work by the time that the Homeric poems received their present form; for we have in the *Iliad*[1] an undoubted reference to a seated statue of Athena in her temple on the Akropolis of Troy. We see here the working of an instinct that was partly religious, partly, perhaps, aesthetic in its origin. If we are to connect it with foreign influences, Egypt is at least a more "proximate cause" than Babylon.

This comparison of the cult-objects set up in shrines or holy places must take into account the phallic emblem also. This was much in vogue in the worship of Hermes and Dionysos, and was not unknown even in the ritual of Artemis.[2] Herodotus maintains that it was adopted by the Hellenes from "the Pelasgians," but, as I have tried to show elsewhere,[3] we cannot attach real value to his induction. It may have descended from an old tradition of European cult, and it was indigenous among other Aryan nations. As regards the Mediterranean races, we find traces of its use in the Samothracian mysteries and in the grave-cult of Phrygia; while some of the records of the Sabazian mysteries suggest that a phallic character attached to them. The Minoan-Mycenaean culture has been regarded as innocent of this, since the phallic emblem does not appear among the monuments yet found; and this opinion is somewhat corroborated by its absence in the ritual of Aphrodite, who may be regarded as a direct descendant of the great Cretan goddess; for only a late and somewhat doubtful text attests the dedication of phalloi to the

[1] 6, 269.
[2] *Cults*, ii. 445.
[3] *Op. cit.*, vol. v. p. 8.

Cyprian Aphrodite.[1] But the evidence from the Phrygian religion, that has many ethnic affinities with Crete, and from such ritual-stories as that of Pasiphae, ought to make us hesitate.

In Semitic ritual the emblem was certainly not commonly in public use, even if it occurred at all; the evidence for it, at present forthcoming, is at least very doubtful; two of the pillars found at Gezer have been supposed to possess phallic attributes;[2] but Robertson Smith has well protested against the foolish tendency to interpret sacred pillars generally as phalloi,[3] and even regards Lucian's assertion of the phallic significance of the two sacred pillars, each three hundred feet in height, that flanked the propylaea of the temple at Hierapolis,[4] as a mistake suggested to him by the later Hellenic misinterpretation. Other statements of Lucian in that treatise may cause us to believe that a phallic character attached to some part of the ritual of the Syrian goddess; but, if it did, we could not safely regard it as originally Semitic, since so many ethnic strains are mingled in that complex religion.

It is doubtful whether we can recognise the emblem anywhere in the religious monuments of the Hittites, though Perrot would give this interpretation to one of the cult-objects carved on the relief of Boghaz-Keui.[5]

Finally, its vogue in Babylonia seems to have been confined to private superstition; from the second millennium onwards it was employed as an amulet,

[1] Arnob. *Adv. Gent.*, 5, 19 (in the mysteries of the Cyprian Venus), "referunt phallos propitii numinis signa donatos."

[2] Cook, *Religion of Ancient Palestine*, p. 28; cf. *Corp. Inscr. Sem.*, i. 11. 6, inscription found in cave, dedicated perhaps by the hierodulai, "pudenda muliebria" carved on the wall.

[3] *Rel. of Sem.*, pp. 437–438.

[4] *De Dea Syria*, c. 16 and c. 28.

[5] *Histoire de l'Art*, iv. pl. viii, D.

and one of the royal chronicles, about 1110 B.C., is inscribed on a tablet that represents a phallos; but we cannot argue from this or any other evidence yet adduced, so far as I am aware, that the emblem was used in public ritual.

So far as we can discern at present, then, the Babylonian and Hellenic phenomena are divergent in respect of pillar-cult and phallic ritual.[1]

The most interesting part of our present inquiry is the comparison of the ceremonies and the concept of sacrifice in East and West. At the first glance we note, as usual, a certain general similarity. In the earliest period we find various animals, both wild and domestic, offered upon the altars, but in Babylonia no special rules concerning their sex, such as were prescribed by ancient Greek and Judaic ritual. In all these countries, again, bloodless offerings of cereals and fruits were in common vogue; and in the earliest Babylonian period, these were of great variety, an inscription of Gudea mentioning butter, honey, wine, corn with milk, figs, dates, as the food of the gods, "untouched by fire."[2] We note here the distinction familiar in Greek ritual, between ἔμπυρα and ἄπυρα ἱερά; only in Babylonia it does not seem to have been of religious importance, nor to have been developed, as it was in Hellas, into a ceremonial law that might engender an important variation in the moral ideas and religious concepts of the worshipper; for instance, the altar of

[1] Jeremias, in his articles on "Izdubar" and "Nebo" in Roscher's *Lexikon*, ii. p. 792 and iii. p. 65, concludes that a phallic emblem was employed in the ritual of Ishtar; but he bases his view on the translation of the word *ibattu* in the Gilgamesh Epic, which is differently rendered by King, *Babylonian Religion*, p. 163, and Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 572.

[2] Thureau-Dangin, *Les Cylindres de Goudéa*, p. 69.

Apollo at Delos was called καθαρός, "the pure altar," because no blood could be shed upon it, the sacrifices of Athena Lindia at Rhodes, and of Zeus in certain mystic rites of Crete, were ἄπυρα, or "fireless," which was the technical name for the oblations of fruits and cereals; and this fact of ritual suggested to later Greek philosophy the ethical-religious view that the "pure," that is to say, bloodless, offering was the more acceptable oblation, and was a tradition of the age of man's innocence. This pregnant idea has not yet been discovered in Mesopotamian or in any other old Semitic religion; the Babylonian deities received both kinds, and perhaps simultaneously, though in certain special ceremonies the sacred cake, or the liquid offerings of milk, honey, wine, and oil, might suffice;[1] while, according to the ancient Hebraic view, as the legend of Cain and Abel indicates, the deity appears to prefer blood-sacrifice, though each species is recognised in the pre-exilic sacral literature.[2]

There is another distinction observed in Greek ritual, that becomes of some importance in the later history of ascetic purity, that between wineless offerings (νηφάλια) and those accompanied with wine: the former being preferred by the powers of the lower world,[3] though not invariably, and certainly not by the departed hero. However this distinction arose—and no single hypothesis explains all the cases—it was not a Semitic tradition, taught in early days to Hellas. For the

[1] This may explain the double phrase, used concerning the institution and endowment of temple-rites in an inscription of the time of Tiglath-Pileser III., which Zimmern translates by "Opfer-Mahlzeiten," *Keil. Bibl.*, iv. p. 103; cf. especially *K.B.*, iii. p. 179 (inscr. of ninth century); Zimmern, *Beiträge zur Kenntniss der Babyl. Relig.*, ii. p. 99 (sacred loaves offered before consultation of divinity).

[2] *Vide* Robertson Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 200.

[3] Vide *Cults*, i. p. 88; v. p. 199.

Semitic divinities, including Jahwé, have a genial liking for wine "which cheereth God and man";[1] nor have we any Semitic example of a taboo on it, except possibly a late Nabataean inscription from the neighbourhood of Palmyra, mentioning "the god who drinks no wine."[2] Such a phrase would certainly not apply to the deities of Babylon; even the sun-god, who in Hellas appears to have been a total abstainer, is offered wine in the Babylonian service,[3] and, according to one verse in the *Epic of Creation*, the deities actually get drunk,[4] a grossness which, in the mythic imagination of Hellas, is only imagined as possible for Dionysos.

We have the right to say, then, that the avoidance of wine in certain religious services of Hellas helps to confirm the impression of its early independence of Semitic influences. The Hellenic rule may, in certain cases, have been derived from an older Aegean tradition; for two of the deities to whom it was applied, Helios and Aphrodite, may be believed to have been bequeathed to Greece by the Minoan-Mycenaean religion; and wine appears to have been prohibited in certain ceremonies of the Phrygian goddess,[5] and of a goddess of Caria.[6]

These are differences of some importance, and doubtless of great antiquity between the ritual of East and West; more insignificant, yet of considerable value for

[1] Judges ix. 13; cf. Robertson Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

[2] Lagranges, *Études sur les religions sémitiques*, p. 506. This seems to agree with the statement in Diodorus (19, 94) that the Nabataeans tabooed wine; yet Dusares, the Arabian counterpart of Dionysos, was a Nabataean god.

[3] Gray, *Shamash Religious Texts*, p. 21.

[4] Dhorme, *Choix*, etc., p. 41, l. 136.

[5] Vide *Cults*, iii. p. 390, R. 57h.

[6] *Ib.*, ii. p. 646.

our present question, is the fact that incense was a regular accompaniment of the Babylonian sacrifice, but did not come into religious use in Greece till some time after the period of Homer. The fact itself we may consider as proved, both by Homer's silence about it, and by the Homeric use of the word θύος, which means "victim," and never "incense," as in later Greek it came to mean. Had the influence of the Mesopotamian culture been as strong on Greece in the second millennium as it came to be from 800 B.C. onwards, we should certainly have expected that the religious use of incense, which is very attractive and spreads easily from one race to another, would have been adopted by Greek ritual before the time of Homer.

A more essential point is the sharp contrast preserved in the Greek rites between the Olympian and the Chthonian ritual; a contrast that demanded a difference of terminology and dictated different sacral laws concerning time, manner, place of sacrifice, and choice of victim. So far, I have not been able to discover any hint of this important bifurcation of ritual in any Mesopotamian record. The only nether-world power who was worshipped at all was Nergal, whether under this or other names; and it does not appear that his worship differed in any essential respect from that of any other high god. In fact, the dualism between powers of the upper and powers of the lower world, which has been generally remarked, and sometimes exaggerated in Hellenic polytheism, only appears slightly in the Babylonian, and seems to have left no impress on the divine service at all.

As regards the animals of sacrifice, the only striking divergence that Hellenic and Semitic custom presents is in respect of the swine. The sanctity or horror with

which this animal was regarded by most Semitic societies[1] is not reflected in any record of early Greek feeling. Being the Hellene's common food, he offered it freely to the deity, though in local cults there might occasionally be a taboo on this as elsewhere on other victims, such as sheep or goat. But it is possible that some of the predecessors of the Hellene in Crete and Asia Minor, if not in Greece itself, shared the Semitic sentiment in regard to the pig; and the reverence paid to it in Crete, and especially at Praisos in later times,[2] may have been a legacy of Minoan religion; also the Carian worship of Hemithea in which swine were tabooed may have had ancient links with Crete.[3] But the facts of swine-sacrifice or swine-reverence, though they serve to distinguish the Hellenic from the ordinary Semitic community, do not bear directly on our present problem, the proofs of early Mesopotamian influence on the proto-Hellenic race. For the usual Semitic taboo has not yet been found in Mesopotamia. The pig is mentioned in a religious text as one of the animals that might be offered to the gods as a vicarious piacular sacrifice, nor is there any hint that the animal is being offered as an unclean animal.[4] Certainly, other animals are mentioned much more frequently as victims; and I am not aware of any other text that mentions swine-sacrifice. It was associated in some way with the god Ninib, one of whose appellatives means "swine"; [5] but no evidence is yet forthcoming that it was offered to him.

[1] Robertson Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 272–273.

[2] Athenae. 376*a* (*Cults*, i. p. 141).

[3] *Cults*, ii. pp. 646–647.

[4] O. Weber, *Dämonenbeschwörung*, p. 29; his note on the passage "that the unclean beast is offered as a substitute for an unclean man" is not supported by any evidence.

[5] Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], pp. 409–410.

A question now arises of greater moment both for our present purpose and for the wider interests of Comparative Religion. Was the purport and significance of the sacrificial act the same in the Western society as that which is revealed in the sacred literature of Babylonia? No part of the ancient religious system has been the theme of so much study and speculation in recent years as the ancient sacrifice. Robertson Smith in his epoch-making book, *The Religion of the Semites*, was the pioneer of a new theory; which has since been developed or modified by certain English and a few Continental scholars following on his track. The result of these labours has been to formulate and define various forms of sacrifice that prevailed in the Mediterranean area. Three main types appear to emerge: (*a*) the gift sacrifice, where an oblation is given over entirely to the deity, whether generally to win his favour, or in special circumstances—for instance, after sin has been committed—to appease his wrath, or as a thank-offering for favour received; (*b*) the communion sacrifice, where the community or the individual eat with the deity, strengthening their feeling of fellowship by a common meal; (*c*) the sacramental type, where the community or the individual may be said to "eat the god," that is, to partake of food or drink made sacred by the infusion of the divine spirit or personality, which is thus communicated to the partaker. It is best for the present to regard these three as separate and independent, without trying to determine which is prior and which posterior.[1]

The first type, which is almost ubiquitous in the human societies that have arrived at the belief in personal

[1] Robertson Smith's theory that the gift-sacrifice was a later degeneracy from the communion-type is unconvincing; *vide* specially an article by Ada Thomsen, "Der Trug von Prometheus," *Arch. Relig. Wissensch.*, 1909, p. 460.

deities, is sufficiently attested by Homer of the early Greeks, who promise and perform the sacrifice partly as an offering to please or to appease the deity. What is more important is the evidence, which I have dealt with elsewhere,[1] that Homeric society was familiar also with the more genial conception of the sacrifice as a communion-meal where the worshipper and the deity meet around the altar; this emerges clearly in the accounts that Homer has given us of an Achaean sacrificial feast.[2] Even the germs are already visible of the idea from which the third or more mystic type of sacrifice, what I have called the sacramental type, might be evolved; for special significance attaches to the acts described in the phrases *οὐλοχύτας προβάλοντο* and *σπλάγχν' ἐπάσαντο*, "they threw forward the barley-shreddings" and "they tasted the entrails": the first phrase is not wholly clear, but it may signify that stalks of barley are first placed on the altar, and thereby consecrated or filled with the divine virtue that is inherent there, and then the beast is touched with these on the forehead and thereby becomes himself filled with the spirit of godhead;[3] the second is also a mystic act, for the *σπλάγχνα* specially contain the life, which is now infused with divinity, and by tasting them the worshippers partake of the divine life. All this arises solely from the extraordinary degree of supernatural force or "Mana" which the altar itself possesses, a force which may have

[1] "Sacrificial Communion in Greek Religion," in *Hibbert Journal*, 1904.

[2] *E.g. Il.*, 1, 457–474; *Od.*, 3, 1–41; 14, 426.

[3] Cf. Schol. *Od.*, 3, 441 (who defines *οὐλοχύται* as barley and salt mixed with water or wine . . . *καὶ ἔθυον αὐτὰ πρὸ τοῦ ἱερείου . . . κριθὰς δὲ ἐνέβαλον τοῖς θύμασι χάριν εὐφορίας*); Schol. *Arist. Equ.*, 1167, *τοῖς θύμασιν ἐπιβαλλόμεναι* [*κριφαί*]. *Vide* Fritz. *Hermes*, 32, 235; for another theory, *vide* Stoll, "Alte Taufgebraüche," in *Arch. Relig. Wissensch.*, 1905, Beiheft, p. 33.

been an inheritance from long ages of pillar-worship, if we believe the altar to have been evolved from the sacred pillar.[1] It explains other details in the old Hellenic sacrificial act; such as the casting the hairs of the victim into the altar-flame,[2] which established a communion between the animal and the deity, the practice of solemnly consecrating the lustral water by ceremoniously carrying it round the altar,[3] and charging it with a still more potent infusion of divinity by plunging into it a lighted brand from the altar-fire.[4]

The communion sacrifice must then have been in vogue in pre-Homeric times; and the idea that gave it its meaning never wholly faded from the State-ritual; for the rule, expressed by such formulae as *οὐκ ἀποφορά*, *δαινύσθων αὐτοῦ*, bidding the worshipper conclude the feast round the altar and take none of the flesh home, seems to arise partly from the feeling that the ceremony was meaningless unless he feasted wholly with the deity.[5] But it was most vividly realised in the religious services of the *θίασοι*, the later religious orders or fraternities devoted each to the cult of its special divinity; for these a common religious meal formed the chief binding-tie.[6]

Apart from the Homeric evidence, we have the record of the Attic Bouphonia as attestation of the great antiquity of this type of sacrifice in Greece. To

[1] *Vide* Evans, "Mycenaean Tree and Pillar Cult," *Hell. Journ.*, 1901, pp. 114–115.

[2] *Od.*, 14, 426; cf. the custom reported from Arabia of mingling hair from the head of a worshipper with the paste from which an idol is made.

[3] Aristoph. *Pax.*, 956.

[4] Athenae, p. 419, B.

[5] Vide *Arch. Rel. Wiss.*, 1909, p. 467; Thomsen there explains it wholly from the idea of tabu.

[6] The common meal of the thiasotaï is often represented on later reliefs, *vide* Perdriyet, "Reliefs Mysiens," *Bull. Corr. Hell.*, 1899, p. 592.

the actual statement of the details given us by Theophrastos and Pausanias, much is added by the curious aetiological legends that grew up around it.[1] We see the ox marking himself for sacrifice by voluntarily going up to the altar and eating the corn upon it, being thus called, as it were, by the god into communion with himself. As he is thus full of the spirit of the god, it is regarded a sacrilegious act to slay him; but all the citizens partake of his flesh, and even the stranger who eats becomes himself a citizen, as through this feast he enters into kinship with Zeus Polieus. All this can be explained by the belief that Zeus Polieus is in the altar; and we need not resort to such theories as that the ox is a totem-animal or the spirit of vegetation.

We must, however, beware of concluding that because the victim was thus temporarily possessed with godhead and in this holy state devoured, he was therefore literally regarded as the full incarnation of the god, or that the worshipper consciously believed he was eating his own deity who died in the sacrifice. For religious consciousness by no means always draws the full logical corollaries of a religious act. The more mystic idea, that has played a great part in the religion of Europe, can only be detected or suspected, apart from written direct ancient testimony, where the animal is treated with reverence apart from and before his association with the altar, or is regarded as the habitual incarnation of the deity. The immolation and devouring of such a victim would be of the true sacramental type, which Robertson Smith believed was the aboriginal form of all sacrifice. But we have no clear example of it from the earliest period of genuine Hellenic religion, unless we

[1] Vide *Cults*, i. pp. 56–58, 88–92.

force the evidence or exaggerate its meaning.[1] We have only certain myths that we may doubtfully venture to interpret by means of this hypothesis. And these are no myths about animals, but about human victims devoured in sacrifice : the most significant is the story of the cannibalistic feast held by King Lykaon, who cooked his own son and offered the flesh to Zeus, a ritual of which some survival, whether mimetic or half-real, was witnessed by Pausanias himself on Mount Lykaon.[2] This would point to sacramental cannibalism, if we assume that King Lykaon was the human incarnation of Zeus Lykaios and that his son was therefore a divine infant. But it is possible that the story enshrines the remembrance of the more ordinary clan-sacrifice of the life of a clansman to procure them communion with the clan-god by the common partaking of his flesh : the kinsman is offered rather than the animal, not so much that the sacrificers may eat their god, but that the god by consuming their most valued life may be more closely incorporate with them.

Again, in one of the darkest and most perplexing of Greek legends, the story of Klumenos of Argos and his incestuous love of his daughter Harpalyke, who revenges herself by slaying her own child and offering it to the father in a sacrificial meal, we may discern the glimmer of a remembrance of a cannibal sacrament. The associations of the story dimly indicate a Thracian origin.[3] And it is in the range of the Greek Dionysiac

[1] In my article on "Sacrificial Communion in Greek Religion," *Hibbert Journal*, 1904, p. 320, I have been myself guilty of this, in quoting the story told by Polynaenus (*Strategem.* 8, 43), about the devouring of the mad bull with golden horns by the Erythraean host, as containing an example of a true sacrament.

[2] Vide *Cults*, vol. i. p. 145.

[3] See Crusius' article in Roscher's *Lexikon*, *s.v.* "Harpalyke."

cult, which according to the most probable view was adopted from Thrace, that we find imprinted on legend and ritual the tradition of a savage type of sacrament, in which the human or animal incarnation of the god was devoured. Such is the significance that we may fairly attach to the Titan-story of the murder of the infant Dionysos, to the σπαραγμός of the goat or bull or snake periodically practised by the Bacchoi or Bacchae, and to the death of Pentheus.[1] And in later Greek ritual the consciousness here and there survived that the victim offered to Dionysos incarnated the very deity, even before it acquired the temporary mystic afflatus from contact with the altar. The record of the ritual of Tenedos, in which a sacred pregnant cow was tended reverently and the calf that she bore was dressed in the buskins and then sacrificed to Dionysos, "the render of men," is the most piquant example.[2]

This Dionysiac tradition reaches back undoubtedly to the second millennium in Greece; the evidence of a similar sacramental ritual in purely Hellenic worship is shadowy and slight, for the critical examination of the Eleusinian mysteries does not clearly reveal it; and the growth and diffusion of the idea in later Paganism does not concern us now.

But the consideration of the early Hellenic sacrifice, of which the salient features have been slightly sketched above, is of signal value for our present purpose. For it reveals at once a marked contrast to Babylonian ideas so far as these at present are revealed to us. The Babylonian-Assyrian liturgies, epics, and chronicles have failed to disclose any other theory of the sacrifice than that which is called the gift-theory. A general

[1] Vide *Cults*, v. pp. 161–172.
[2] *Ib.*, v. p. 165.

term for the Babylonian sacrifice is "kishtu" or "present."[1] The deities are supposed to eat what is given them; in the Epic of the Deluge the naïve phrase occurs, "The gods smell the savour, the delightful savour, the gods swarm like flies around the sacrificer." No evidence is as yet forthcoming that the sacrificer was supposed or was allowed to eat with the deity, as in the Hellenic communion-sacrifice. On the contrary, certain texts can be quoted which seem expressly to forbid such a thing.[2] The document already cited that was found in Assurbanipal's library, containing the Job-like lament of the good man who had found no profit in goodness, contains a verse in which he compares himself with the sinner who neglects all religious ordinances, and who has even "eaten the food of God." And so we find that among the various evil or impure or unlucky deeds that could bring a man under the ban of the gods, the "devouring of sacrificial flesh" is expressly mentioned.[3]

Unless, then, documents yet to be revealed contradict this positive and negative evidence, we have here a fact of great weight to set against the theory that we are discussing. Whencesoever the Hellenes derived their genial conception of the sacrifice as a communion-meal, they did not derive it from Babylon. And all Robertson Smith's speculations concerning the inner significance of the Semitic sacrifice cannot yet be applied to Mesopotamia, whence he was not able to glean any evidence. In Babylonia the sacrificer got no share of the victim. He might eat with the spirits of the dead in certain ritual, but he was not, it appears, privi-

[1] *K.A.T.*[3], p. 596.
[2] Jeremias, *Die Cultus-Tafel von Sippar*, p. 26.
[3] Zimmern, *Beiträge zur Kennt. Bab. Rel.*, p. 15.

leged to eat with the god or goddess. The deity took the victim, or the sacrifice of cereals and fruits, as a present, and the priest got his share. But we are not told that the priest ate with the god, or where he ate; nor can we say that the priest represented the worshipper.

If a true sacrament is yet to be discovered in Babylonian religion, it will probably be found in some document of the Tammuz ritual. For it is probable that Tammuz was identified with the corn as with other parts of vegetation, and that the mourning for him was accompanied with abstinence from bread. His resurrection ended the fast, and if in their joy the worshippers ceremoniously broke bread, they may have supposed they were eating the body of their risen lord. But such a reconstruction of the old Tammuz ritual rests at present only on the indirect evidence of the later records of Attis-Adonis cult and of the Tammuz-worship among the heathen Syrians of Harran in the tenth century of our era.[1]

It belongs to the Babylonian conception of the sacrifice as a gift, that the animal was often regarded as a ransom for the man's own life; that is to say, when sin had been committed, the deity might be placated by the gift of an agreeable victim, and be persuaded to accept it in place of the sinner whose life was properly forfeit. For instance, a sick man is always supposed to have sinned; and the priest who is performing an animal sacrifice in his behalf uses the prayer, "Take his present, take his ransom";[2] and the formula of a sacrifice offered by way of exorcism is very explicit: "A male sheep, a female sheep, a living sheep, a dead

[1] *Vide* Frazer, *Adonis-Attis-Osiris*, p. 189; cf. "Communion in Greek Religion," *Hibbert Journ.*, 1904, p. 317.

[2] Jeremias, *Die Cultus-Tafel von Sippar*, p. 28.

sheep shall die, but I shall live." [1] Another inscription [2] throws further light on the ritual of the vicarious sacrifice: "To the high-priest may one cry out: the kid of substitution for the man, the kid for his soul he hath brought: place the head of the kid to the head of the man, place the neck of the kid to the neck of the man, place the breast of the kid to the breast of the man." Whether this solemn manipulation was performed after or before the sacrifice, its object must have been to establish by contact a communion between the man and the victim, so that the kid might be his most efficacious representative. It thus became part of the higher ethical teaching of Babylon that "sacrifice brings life," just as "prayer takes away sin," a doctrine expressed in a fragmentary tablet that contains a text of striking spiritual import.[3]

The type of sacrifice that may be called vicarious must have been an ancient as well as a later tradition in Greece; for the legends associated with many sacrifices clearly attest it, explaining certain animal victims as substitutes for a human life that was formerly demanded by the offended deity, the vicarious sacrifice usually carrying with it the ideas of sin and atonement.[4] The substitution might occasionally

[1] Weber, *Dämonenbeschwörung*, etc., p. 29.

[2] iv. R², pl. 26, No. 6; this is the inscription quoted by Prof. Sayce (*vide infra*, p. 182, n.) as a document proving human sacrifice. I owe the above translation to the kindness of Dr. Langdon; it differs very slightly from Zimmern's in *K.A.T.*³, p. 597.

[3] Jeremias, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

[4] Renan's thesis (*C. I. Sem.*, i. p. 229) that the idea of sin, so dominant in the Hebrew and Phoenician sacrifice, was entirely lacking in the Hellenic, cannot be maintained; he quotes Porph. *De Abstin.*, 1, 2, 24, a passage which contains an incomplete theory of Greek sacrifice. The sin-offering is indicated by Homer, and is recognised frequently in Greek literature and legend; only no technical term was invented to distinguish it from the ordinary cheerful sacrifice.

be apologised for by a legal fiction, as, for instance, when in the ritual of the Brauronian Artemis the angry goddess demanded the life of a maiden, and the Athenian parent sacrificed a goat, "calling it his daughter."[1]

But though this idea is common to the Mesopotamian and Hellenic communities, they differ widely in respect of the evidence they afford, of the prevalence of human sacrifice. As regards ancient Greece, the evidence is indubitable, though much that has been brought by modern scholars is due to false interpretation of ritual, such as the scourging of the Spartan boys; later, the human sacrifice became repugnant to the advancing ethical thought of the nation, but according to one authority did not wholly die out till the age of Hadrian. On the other hand, no literary text nor any monument has yet been found that proves the existence of such a ritual in Babylonia. In one of his biographical inscriptions Assurbanipal proclaims that he "sacrificed" prisoners of war to avenge his murdered father on the spot where his father was slain.[2] He boasts of worse things than this; and we can well believe that he murdered them in cold blood. But the

[1] *Cults*, ii. p. 441.

[2] Vide *K.A.T.*[3], pp. 434, 599, where Zimmern refers to the monuments published by Ménant, *Pierres gravées*, i. figs. 94, 95, 97, as possibly showing a scene of human sacrifice. But Ménant's interpretation of them is wrong; *vide* Langdon, *Babyloniaca*, Tome iii. p. 236, "two Babylonian seals"; the kneeling figure is the owner of the seal; the personage behind him is no executioner, but Ramman or Teschub holding, not a knife, but his usual club. The inscriptions published by Prof. Sayce (*Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, iv. pp. 25–29) are translated differently by Dr. Langdon, so that the first one (iv. R[2], pl. 26, No. 6) refers to the sacrifice of a kid, not of an infant. The misinterpretation of the inscription has misled Trumbull (*Blood Covenant*, p. 166). The statement in 2 Kings xvii. 31 about the Sepharvites in Samaria does not necessarily point to a genuine Babylonian ritual, even if we are sure that the Sepharvites were Babylonians.

words by no means suggest a ceremonious tomb-ritual with human sacrifice.

Slightly more important is a passage in a legal document, to which Mr. Johns [1] calls attention; whence it appears that a forfeit for reopening an already adjudicated cause was the consecration of one's eldest child by fire to a god or goddess; and, as incense and cedar-wood are mentioned in the same context as concomitants of the threatened ceremony, the conclusion seems natural that this was once at least a real threat of human sacrifice inflicted as a legal punishment. This legal clause gives us the right to conclude that in the earliest period the Semites and Sumerians of Mesopotamia occasionally resorted to this rite. They would be indeed a peculiar people and a favoured nation if they had always been innocent of it. It is sufficiently attested by direct evidence, either of record or excavation, or by the suggestion of legend, of the Arabs, Syrians, the early Canaanites,[2] the Israelites, the Phoenicians; also of the Phrygians and other non-Semitic peoples of Anatolia. Yet it must be put to the credit of the Babylonian culture of the second millennium, that the Mesopotamians had either completely or almost abandoned it. At this time it was doubtless in full vogue in Greece; and certainly Babylon could not have been their evil teacher in this matter. But they needed no teachers in what was an ancient tradition of their northern ancestors, and of the people with whom they mingled. Yet only twenty years ago a distinguished writer on Greek ritual could say, "It is certain that the

[1] *Babylonian and Assyrian Laws*, p. 95.

[2] The excavations at Gezer have revealed almost certain evidence of the early practice of human sacrifice; a number of skeletons, one of a girl sawn in half, were found buried under the foundation of houses (*vide* Cook, *op. cit.*, pp. 38–39).

Hellenes borrowed the practice of human sacrifice from the Orientals." [1]

As we discover no trace of the idea of communion in the ordinary Babylonian sacrifice, we are the less surprised that scarcely any hint is given by the sacred literature or monuments of any mystic application of the blood of the victim, which was used for so many purposes of communion-ritual by the early Hellenes and Hebrews. I can find no other evidence for this in Mesopotamia except one passage quoted by Zimmern,[2] in which the sacrificer is ordered to sprinkle some part of the door with the blood of the lamb. It is not probable that the Babylonians were incapable of the notion that by physical contact with certain sacred objects a temporary communion could be established between the mortal and the divinity: it appears, for instance, in one of the formulae of the purification-ritual—"May the torch of the Fire-god cleanse me" [3]—in the yearly practice of the king grasping the hands of the idol of the god, perhaps in the custom of attaching the worshipper to the deity with a cord,[4] and in the diviner's habit of grasping the cedar-staff, which is called "the beloved of the gods." [5] But it may be that they never applied this notion to the sacrifice, so as to evolve the institution of the communion-meal; or they may have evolved it in early times, and through long ages

[1] Stengel, *Die griechischen Kultusalterthümer*, p. 89.

[2] *K.A.T.*[3], p. 599.

[3] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, i. p. 500.

[4] Might this be the meaning of a line in a hymn translated by Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 549, "I turn myself to thee (O Goddess Gula), I have grasped thy cord as the cord of my god and goddess" (*vide* King, *Babyl. Magic*, No. 6, No. 71–94); or of the phrase in the Apocrypha (*Epist. Jerem.*, 43), "The women also with cords about them sit in the ways"?

[5] Zimmern's *Beiträge*, etc., p. 99.

of power the priests may have become strong enough to suppress it and to substitute for it the gift-ritual, which would be more profitable for themselves. It accords with this absence of any mystic significance in the sacrifice that we do not find in the Babylonian service any mystic use of the sacrificial skins, of which some evidence can be gathered from various details of Greek ritual.[1]

Again, the Babylonian records have so far failed to reveal any evidence for any such public ceremony as the sending forth of the scapegoat, whether human or animal, charged with the sins of the community. This ritual was common to the Hellenes, Egyptians, and Hebrews, and probably to other Semitic communities.[2] The idea of sin-transference on which it rests was familiar enough to the ancient Babylonian; but he seems only to have built upon this a private system of exorcism and purgation of sin and disease for the individual. As far as we know, it did not occur to him to effect by this method a solemn annual expulsion of all the sins of the nation.

On the other hand, there is another type of sacrifice common to Babylonia and Greece, by which an oath or an engagement might be cemented: the animal is slaughtered with an imprecation that the same fate may befall him who breaks his oath or violates the compact. Zimmern quotes a good example of this, relating to the compact made between the Assyrian king Assur-

[1] On the famous bronze plaque of the Louvre (Jeremias, *Hölle und Paradies*, p. 28, Abb. 6) we see two representatives of Ea in the fish-skin of the god; and on a frieze of Assur-nasir-pal in the British Museum (*Hell. Journ.*, 1894, p. 115, fig. 10; Layard, *Monuments of Nineveh*, 1, pl. 30), two men in lions' skins; but these are not skins of animals of sacrifice.

[2] *Vide* my *Evolution of Religion*, pp. 118–120.

nirari and Mati'ilu, prince of Arpad:[1] a sheep is sacrificed and the formula pronounced: "This head is not the head of a sheep, it is the head of Mati'ilu, of his sons, of his great ones, of the people of his land. If Mati'ilu breaks this oath, the head of Mati'ilu will be cut off, like the head of this sheep." The same idea underlies the oath-sacrifice in the *Iliad*,[2] though it is not expressed with such naïve make-believe or such logic in the detail; but as the beast is slaughtered or wine poured, a curse is uttered invoking on the perjured a similar fate, or with a prayer that "his brains may be poured out like this wine." The original idea is magical: the symbolic explanation is later. Another parallel is the Latin oath over the stone.[3]

Such resemblance in special forms by no means weakens the impression that we receive from the striking differences discernible in the Babylonian and Hellenic significance of sacrifice. To those already noted we may add yet another, which concerns the association of sacrifice with divination. It is Professor Jastrow's opinion[4] that the chief motive of the Babylonian sacrifice was the inspection of the liver of the victim, from the markings of which the skilled expert could interpret the future by a conventional system revealed to us in certain ancient Babylonian documents. This superstition is so elaborate and artificial that if we find it in adjacent countries, it is more reasonable to suppose that one borrowed it from the other, than that it was developed independently in each. We find it in later Greece, Etruria, and Rome; but the evidence of the Homeric poems suggests that it was unknown to the

[1] *K.A.T.*[3], p. 49.
[2] 3, 300; 19, 265–267.
[3] Polybius, 3, 25, ἐγὼ μόνος ἐκπέσοιμι οὕτως ὡς ὅδε λίθος νῦν.
[4] *Op. cit.*, ii. p. 217.

Hellenes of the earlier period. They are very likely to have borrowed it from Babylonian sources in post-Homeric times; and we note here, as in other cases where the influence of Babylon upon Greece can be reasonably posited, it reaches the western shores of the Aegean at a post-Homeric rather than a pre-Homeric epoch.

The comparative study of Mesopotamian and Hellenic sacrifice confronts us finally with another problem belonging to the history of religions, and one of the greatest, the dogma of the death of the divinity and the origin and significance of that belief. For where the mystic type of communion-sacrifice is found, where the animal that is slain for the sacrament is regarded as the incarnation of the deity, the divinity may be supposed himself to die temporarily, doubtless to rise again to life, either immediately or at some subsequent festival. This momentous conclusion need not always have been drawn, for religious logic is not often persistently thorough, nor does the evolution of the idea belong necessarily to the sphere of totemism, as Robertson Smith supposed, and M. Reinach is still inclined to maintain. It is not my concern here to discuss the totemistic hypothesis, but I may point out that in the rare examples where the totem-animal is slain, it is not clear that it is slain as a divinity.

Again, the belief in the periodic death of a deity might arise independently of the sacrifice, namely, from the essential idea of the godhead itself, when the divine life is identified with the annual life of vegetation: the phenomena of nature in autumn and spring may suggest to the worshipper the annual death and resurrection of the god or goddess. It is important to note that in this, as in the other source of the belief, the conclusion need not always have been drawn, for the vegetation-

deity might be supposed not to die in autumn or winter, but merely to disappear, and the story of his or her disappearance need not carry the same religious consequences as the story of the divine death.

The immolation of the divine victim in a communion-service, wherein the worshippers partake symbolically or realistically of the divine flesh and blood, though suggested by a thought that we must call savage, may be pregnant with consequences momentous for higher religion, as the history of Christian dogma attests. And even the annual death of the nature-god may be raised to a higher significance than its mere nature-meaning, and may be linked with the promise of human immortality.

We may note, finally, that a religion which expresses in its ritual the idea of the deity's death and resurrection is likely to be charged with a stronger emotional force than one that lacks it; for the two events will excite an ecstasy of sorrow and of joy in the believer.

As the phenomenon, then, is of such importance, it is necessary to be critical and unbiased in the collection of statistics. Our present field of inquiry is the Eastern and Western Mediterranean area; and here our conspicuous example is the ancient Sumerian-Babylonian ritual of Tammuz,[1] a folk-service of lamentation and rapture, psychologically akin in many respects to Christianity, and of most powerful appeal.

The Tammuz hymns preserved to us are of the highest Babylonian poetry, and though they are chiefly litanies of lamentation, sorrowing over the death of the young god, yet one or two echoes are heard at their close of the rapturous rejoicing over his resurrec-

[1] According to Dr. Langdon (*op. cit.*, p. xvi.), the wailing for Tammuz was developed in the early Sumerian period of the fourth millennium.

tion.[1] With them is associated the story of the descent of his consort Ishtar, or of his goddess-sister; another great motive of the religious imagination which neighbouring peoples and faiths were quick to capture and adapt to their own religious use. We have seen [2] that the evidence is clear that the life of Tammuz is the life of the crops and fruits; and we discern a pure nature-religion unmoralised and without dogma, but evoking a mood and a sentiment that might supply the motive force to more complex and more spiritual creeds. It was not suited to the religious atmosphere of the Assyrian and Babylonian courts; but its influence spread far through Asia Minor. It captivated the other polytheistic Semites, and at times, as Ezekiel shows us, the women of Israel, revealing to these latter, no doubt, a vein of religious sentiment unknown in the austere Mosaic monotheism. The ritual of Adonis is mainly borrowed from the Tammuz service. For instance, the rite of planting the short-lived "garden of Adonis," of which possibly the earliest record is in Isaiah xvii. 10, appears to be alluded to in a verse of a Tammuz hymn.[3] The figure of Tammuz is primevally Sumerian; therefore the diffusion of his cult among the various Semitic communities does not enable us to conclude that the death and resurrection of a divinity is an aboriginal Semitic tradition. As regards other evidence on the strength of which this dogma has been attributed to them by some scholars, it is of late authority and of doubtful validity. Josephus [4] tells us that at Tyre the

[1] Langdon, *op. cit.*, 300–341; cf. Zimmern, "Sumerisch-Babylonische Tamuzlieder," in *Sitzungsber. König. Sächs. Gesell. Wissen.*, 1907, pp. 201–252, and his discussion, "Der Babylonische Gott Tamuz," in *Abhandl. König. Sächs. Gesell. Wissen.*, 1909.

[2] *Vide supra*, p. 105. [3] *Vide* Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 501.

[4] *Antiqu.*, 8, 5, 3; cf. Clem. *Recogn.*, 10, 24; Baudissin in his

resurrection of Herakles was once celebrated by Hiram ; but this might well be a derivative of the non-Semitic Sandon cult of Tarsos, which will be considered below. And the legend of the death of Dido at Carthage, even if there is no doubt that the queen was originally the great goddess of Tyre, is no sufficient proof of a Phoenician ritual in which the divinity died annually.

But as regards the non-Semitic peoples of anterior Asia, the question of borrowing is more difficult to answer with certainty.

No Hittite monument nor any Hittite text has as yet revealed to us any figure that we can identify with Tammuz. But certain indications incline us to believe that the idea of the death of the god was not unfamiliar to the Hittite religion or to some of the communities under Hittite influence. On the Boghaz-Keui relief we have noted the presence in the religious procession of those mysterious animals, calves, or bulls, wearing caps of peculiar Hittite fashion.[1] Are not these " theanthropic animals " to be sacrificed as a communion-link between man and God? We know that the bull was worshipped as an incarnation of a Hittite deity ; and therefore from the sacrifice of the bull might emerge the dogma that the deity ceremoniously died at certain periods. From the sanctity of the bull in ancient Hittite cult-centres may have descended the mystic communion

Eschmun-Asklepios (*Oriental. Stud. zu Nöldeke gewidmet*, p. 752) thinks that the Healer-god, Marduk Asclepios Eschmun, is himself one who died and rose again in Assyrian and Phoenician theology. For Asklepios of Berytos we have the almost useless story of Damascius in Phot. *Bibl.*, 573 H. ; the uncritical legend in Ktesias (c. 21) and Ael. *Var. Hist.*, 13, 3, about the grave of Belitana at Babylon (to which Strabo also alludes, p. 740), does not justify the view that the death of Marduk was ever a Babylonian dogma.

[1] Perrot-Chipiez, *Histoire de l'Art*, iv. pl. viii.

rite of the Taurobolion or Tauropolion, which Cumont has shown good reason for supposing to have arisen in the worship of the Persian Anahita, and to have been adopted into the service of Kybele.[1]

More direct evidence is to be gleaned from the cult of Sandon or Sandes of Tarsos, a city which was once within the area of Hittite culture. The god of Tarsos comes later to be identified with the Tyrian Baal and the Hellenic Herakles; and the legend of the death of the latter hero may be an echo of a ἱερὸς λόγος of Tarsos, inspired by an annual rite in which the god of the city was consumed on a funeral pyre, and was supposed to rise again from the flames in the form of an eagle.[2] The later Tarsian coins display the image of the god, the pyre, the eagle, the double-headed axe, and the lion;[3] and the last three of these symbols belong to the oldest religious art of the Hittites. The proof would be complete if it could be shown that the name Sandon or Sandes belongs to the Hittite language. All we know at present is that it is not a Babylonian or Sumerian word, or found in the vocabulary of any Semitic people. Prof. Sayce believes himself to have found it in a cuneiform inscription of Boghaz-Keui. This would be the direct proof that we require; but the word that he transliterates as Sandes is said to be the ideogram of Hadad, the Syrian Semitic god, and that Hadad is used as the Semitic equivalent of Sandes is merely a conjuncture.[4]

A still clearer and more striking example of the phenomenon with which we are dealing is the Phrygian

[1] *Rev. de Philol.*, 1893, p. 195.

[2] *Vide* Frazer, *op. cit.*, pp. 98–99.

[3] K. O. Müller, *Kleine Schriften*, vol. ii. pp. 102–103.

[4] *Journ. Roy. Asiat. Soc.*, 1909, pp. 966, 971; the information about the true meaning of the ideogram I owe to Dr. Langdon.

and Lydian cult and legend of Attis. The various and often conflicting details in the story of his birth, life, and death, the various elements in his cult, are known to us from late sources; the consideration of the whole question would not be relevant here; but it is necessary for our purpose to determine, if possible, what are the aboriginal motives of the myth and cult. It seems likely that the earliest form of the Phrygian religion was the worship of the great mother-goddess, coupled with a son or lover,[1] a young and beautiful god who dies prematurely, and whose death was bewailed in an annual ritual, whose resurrection was presented in a subsequent or accompanying service. Of the death and the lamentation we have older evidence than for the resurrection and the rejoicing, but the one seems to be a necessary complement of the other. The family likeness of Attis to Tammuz strikes us at first sight. As Tammuz appears as a young vegetation deity, identified partly with the life of trees, partly with the corn, so Attis in the Phrygian legend and ritual is presented as a tree-divinity, and in the verse of a late hymn, which is inspired by an ancient tradition, is invoked as "the corn cut by the reaper."

And these two personalities of the Sumerian and Phrygian religions evoked the same psychologic sentiment, sorrowful, romantic, and yearning. The hypothesis naturally suggests itself that the more Western people borrowed the cult from Mesopotamia, and that this had happened as early as B.C. 1500.[2] All scholars are agreed at all events that the figure of Attis belongs to the older pre-Aryan stratum of the population of

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 91; cf. *Cults*, ii. pp. 644–649; iii. pp. 300–305.

[2] The Babylonian myths of Etana and Adapa, and their ascent to heaven, may have given the cue to the Phrygian stories of Ganymede and Tantalos.

Phrygia; modern speculation is sometimes inclined to regard this as Hittite, and we know that the Hittites adopted some part of the Babylonian religion. But the name Attis itself is a stumbling-block to the hypothesis of borrowing from Mesopotamia. Believing Adonis to be a Western-Semitic form of Tammuz, we can explain the name as meaning merely "the Lord," a natural appellative of the Sumerian god. But we cannot so explain "Attis." It is non-Semitic, and must be regarded as belonging to an Anatolian language-group, nor can we yet discover its root-meaning.

Again, there are many features of the Attis-worship and legend that are not found in the corresponding Sumerian, and one at least that seems essentially alien to it. The death of the vegetation-god, originally suggested by the annual phenomenon of nature, may be explained by various myths, when the personal deity has so far emerged from his nature-shell that he is capable of personal drama. The death of Tammuz does not appear to have been mythologically explained at all. We may suppose that the killing of Adonis by the boar was borrowed from the Attis legend, for in Phrygia, and also in Lydia—as the Herodotean Ates story proves—this animal was sometimes regarded as the enemy that slew the god. It is a reasonable belief that the boar came to play this part in the story through a misunderstanding of certain ritual, in which this victim was annually offered as incarnating the deity, or was reverentially spared through a sacrificial law of tabu. If this is an original fact of Attis-cult, it counts somewhat against the hypothesis of derivation from Mesopotamia, for the pig does not appear to have played any such part, positive or negative, in Mesopotamian, as in the ritual of the Western Semites and

on the shores of Asia Minor; nor can any connection at present be discovered between Tammuz and this animal.

But another version of the death of Attis, current at some time among his worshippers, was that he died from the effects of self-mutilation, a motive suggested by the emasculation of the Phrygian Galloi. We have here a phenomenon in the cult and myth that was alien to the religious habits of the Mesopotamian communities. The eunuch as a secular functionary is a figure belonging to an immemorial social tradition of the East; but the eunuch-priest is the morbid product of a very few religions, and there is no trace of such in Mesopotamia. The Babylonian church-law demanded an unblemished priesthood of strong virility, agreeing in this respect with the Judaic and the Hellenic, and according with an ancient sentiment that the vigour of the priest was the pledge of that continued flow of divine power which supported the vigour of the community. Self-emasculation was penalised in the religious rule of Jahwé, and the Gallos was excluded from temple-worship by the ritual code of Lesbos. The records of modern savagery and the history of ascetism, whether in modern and mediaeval India or in early Christianity, afford us varied illustration of the wildest excesses of self-inflicted cruelty against the human body, but not—so far as I am aware—of this particular form of self-destruction.[1]

As a religious practice it is a special characteristic of Phrygia, a land always fascinating to the student on account of its strange freaks of religious psychology; and from Phrygia the practice spread into some adjacent communities, such as Bambyke. One may be allowed

[1] Dr. Frazer, in *Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings* (*G. B.*, vol. ii. p. 45), quotes from N. Tsackni (*La Russie Sectaire*, p. 74) an example of a fanatic Christian sect in modern Russia practising castration. I have not been able to find this treatise.

to pause a little to consider the original motive that prompted it. At first sight one is tempted to explain it as due to a morbid exaggeration of the craving for purity. But elsewhere, where this impulse was most powerful, for instance, in the later Orphic and Isis cults, and in early and mediaeval Christianity, it produced many mental aberrations but not this particular one. Nor, again, have we any reason for supposing this craving to have been strong in the devotees of Phrygia; the Galloi of Bambyke, according to Lucian, were possessed by strong though impotent sexual desires and were allowed full license with women. The form of communion most ardently sought with the Phrygian goddess and with the later Sabazios was a marriage symbolised by a sexual act; and Greek and Latin writers, both pagan and Christian, agree in reprobating the obscenities of Kybele-Attis worship; we may note also that Phrygian sacred mythology is somewhat grosser than the Hellenic.

We are compelled to seek another explanation, and I can suggest none other than that which I have hazarded elsewhere; namely, that Phrygian religious emasculation was an act performed in a frenzy of exaltation by the priest or *mystes* desirous of assimilating himself as far as possible to the female nature of the great divinity.[1]

[1] Vide *Cults*, iii. pp. 300–301. Dr. Frazer's theory is that the act of castration was performed in order to maintain the fruitfulness of the earth (*op. cit.*, pp. 224–237). But this is against the countless examples which he himself has adduced of the character and function of the priest or priest-king as one whose virile strength maintains the strength of the earth; the sexual act performed in the field by the owner increases the fruitfulness of the field (Frazer, *GB*², ii. p. 205). Why should the priest make himself impotent so as to improve the crops? The only grounds of his belief appear to be that the priest's testicles were committed to the earth or to an underground shrine of Kybele (Arnob. *Adv. Gent.*, v. 14, and Schol. Nikand. *Alexipharm.*, 7; vide *Cults*, 3; Kybele Ref. 54*a*); but such consecration of them to Kybele would be natural on any hypothesis, and Arnobius' words do not prove that they were buried in the bare earth.

The worship was under male ministration for the highest part; but for the full exercise of divine power the male priest must become quasi-female and wear a female dress, the latter part of the rôle being common enough in primitive "theurgy." The priest is himself at times the incarnation of the young god, and is called Attis. Therefore Attis was himself supposed to have performed the same act, even at the cost of his life. How early was this institution of a eunuch priesthood in Phrygia we have no direct evidence to prove. It may be a "Hittite" tradition; for figures that Perrot reasonably interprets as eunuch-priests are seen on the reliefs of Boghaz-Keui.

Returning to the topic of the death of the divinity, we may assume that in Phrygia this was a very ancient tradition, enacted yearly by a ceremonious laying out of the vegetation puppet on a bier, or the suspension of it on a pine-tree. We have no direct or otherwise trusty evidence for the immolation of the priest who incarnates the god; doubtless the stories about the death of Marsyas and the harvest-sacrifice of Lityerses point to a ritual of human-sacrifice; whom Marsyas stands for is doubtful, but in the Lityerses legend it is merely the passing stranger who is slain, and neither of these traditions is explicitly linked with Attis-cult.

Finally, we may pronounce the hypothesis of the derivation of the Phrygian cult from Mesopotamia to be unproved and unnecessary.

Pursuing this phenomenon further afield, we come to the area of Minoan-Mycenaean culture. If the legend of the death of the Minotaur could be safely interpreted as arising from the periodic immolation of a bull-god, the idea that we are in quest of would be proved to belong to the Minoan Cretans; but the

frescoes of Knossos present that event with such a gay and sporting *entourage* that one feels shy of forcing a solemn religious significance into it. More important for our purpose is the traditional Zeus-legend of Crete. It is generally felt to be alien to the genuine Hellenic tradition concerning their high god, as something adopted by the immigrant Hellenes from an earlier Eteocretan ritual and creed.[1] We have a glimpse of a ritual in which the deity is born, is worshipped as an infant, and then as a boy—κοῦρος, as he is invoked in the new fragment of the hymn of the Kouretes—and especially as the son of a great mother, not as a mature independent personality. Again, there appears an orgiastic emotion and passion in the ritual that strikes a note in harmony with the Phrygian Kybele-Attis worship. The very early associations of Crete and the countries adjacent to the Troad are now being revealed by accumulating evidence, and may point to an affinity of stock. It may well have been, then, that the Minoan Cretans had their counterpart to Attis, a young god who was born and died periodically, whom they may have named Velchanos, the name of the young deity seen sitting under a tree on a Cretan coin of the fifth century. Though in age and character so unlike the Hellenic Zeus, we may suppose that the incoming Hellenes named him so because they found him the chief god of the island. We can also understand why the later Bacchic mystery flourished so fruitfully in Crete, if it found here already the ritual of a young god who died and rose again, and why in later times the inhabitants celebrated with such enthusiasm the Hilaria,[2] the Easter festival of the resurrection of the Phrygian divinity.

[1] Vide *Cults*, i. pp. 36–38.
[2] Vide *Evolution of Religion*, p. 62.

This attempt to reconstruct a portion of old Cretan religion on the lines of the early Phrygian has only a precarious value, until some more positive evidence is forthcoming from the Minoan art-record, which hitherto has revealed to us nothing concerning an annual divine birth and death. The ritual-legend is incomplete: we hear sufficiently of the birth, and we may argue *a priori* that a periodic ritual of the god's birth implies a periodic death. Unfortunately all that we glean from ancient literature is that there was a grave of Zeus, perhaps in the Idaean cave, on which Pythagoras is said to have written an epitaph.[1] But a sceptical doubt arises here from the fact which was pointed out by Rohde, that the grave of a divine personage was often a misnomer of the underground sanctuary of a chthonian deity; and either the Idaean cave or the great cavern on Mount Dikte, whence the interesting relics of an immemorial cult have recently been gathered,[2] might at a later period have come to be regarded as a grave. Still, we may ask, could the phrase "the grave of Zeus" have become prevalent among a people with whom the worship of this god was still a living creed, unless the faith also prevailed that the god who died rose again to power? In that case the "grave of Zeus" could be a name for a sanctuary where the ritual of the death was enacted preliminary to the ritual of the birth.

This reconstruction then, and the *a priori* deduction emphasised above, may claim to be at least legitimate.

Finally, some evidence may be added from Cyprian cult for the view that the Minoan civilisation was

[1] Porph. *Vit. Pyth.*, 17; cf. Callim. *H. ad. Jov.*, 8; Diod. Sic., 3, 61; vide *Cults*, i. pp. 36–37.

[2] *Vide* A. Evans in *Hell. Journ.*, xvii. 350.

cognisant of the dogma of the death of the divinity. We hear of the grave of Ariadne-Aphrodite which was shown in later times in Cyprus,[1] and the Cretan and Cypriote legends of the maidens called Gorgo, Parakuptousa, and Galatea[2] reveal to us an Aphrodite who died periodically and was laid out on a bier and revived. The Aphrodite of Cyprus is most probably of "Minoan" origin; and, being a goddess of vegetation, the idea of periodic death and resurrection might naturally attach to her, and might be associated with another type of ritual also, the annual casting of her puppet into the sea, which probably gave rise to such stories as the leap of Britomartis or Derketo into the waves.[3]

We can now deal with the purely Hellenic evidence. Confining our view first to the cults and legends of the higher divinities of Hellas, we cannot affirm that the death and resurrection of the deity is a primitive tradition of the Hellenes. We may suspect it to have been a leading motive in some of the local Arcadian cults of Artemis, if, for instance, we interpret the Arcadian Kallisto as a form of the great goddess herself; but it is very probable that Artemis in Arcadia and many other of her cult-centres represents the pre-Hellenic divinity of birth and fruitfulness. What we may dare to call the Hellenic spirit seems to speak in the answer given by Xenophanes to the people of Elea when they asked him whether they ought to sacrifice to Leukothea and bewail her": "If you regard her as a deity, do not bewail her; if as human, do not sacrifice."[4]

But when we descend from the higher religion to

[1] Vide *Cults*, vol. ii. p. 651; cf. Clem. *Recogn.*, 10, 24, "sepulcrum Cypriae Veneris apud Cyprum."

[2] *Ib.*, pp. 651–652.

[3] Vide *Cults*, vol. ii. pp. 447, n. *c.*, 478, 638, n. *a.*

[4] Aristot. *Rhet.*, 2, 23.

the old Hellenic agrarian cults associated with the heroes or daimones of the soil and field, we find evidence of sorrowful rites, ceremonies of bewailing, which belong to the same type as that of Tammuz ; and in the Greek, as in the Babylonian, the personage to whom they are attached is a youthful hero or heroine of vegetation : such are Linos, perhaps the earliest theme of a melancholy harvest-song of pre-Homeric days ; Hyakinthos, the "youth" of the Laconian land who may or may not have been Hellenic, to whom the greater part of the Hyakinthia were consecrated ; Eunostos of Tanagra ; Erigone, "the early-born," of Ikaria. The life of all these passes away as the verdure passes, or as the crops are gathered in ; and to one of them at least, Hyakinthos, and perhaps to the others, the idea of an annual resurrection was attached. But none of these came like Tammuz to play a world-part ; they remain the naïve, half-realised forms of poetic folk-religion. Like to them is Bormos of Bithynia,[1] whose death was bewailed at the harvest-time with melancholy songs, accompanied by sad flute-music, and Lityerses of Phrygia, whom the reapers lamented around the threshing-floor.

Shall we say that all these are merely reflections cast afar by the great cult-figure of Babylon ?

Then we must say the same of the peasant-hero "German" whom the modern Bulgarians adore and bewail, of the Russian Yarilo,[2] and our own John Barleycorn. And at this point we shall probably fall back on the theory of independent similar developments, and shall believe that peasant religion in different parts of the world is capable of evolving strikingly parallel

[1] Athenae, p. 620 A (*ζητεῖν αὐτὸν τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας μετά τινος μεμελῳδημένου θρήνου καὶ ἀνακλήσεως*) ; Pollux., 4, 54.

[2] Frazer, *GB* [2], vol. ii. p. 106.

figures in obedience to the stimulus of similar circumstances and needs.

We have no surety, then, for a belief that Tammuz, or any shadow of Tammuz, was borne to the western shores of the Aegean in the days before Homer. And we know that Adonis, his nearest Anatolian representative, only arrived late in the post-Homeric period. Meantime, whatever view we may hold concerning prehistoric religious commerce between East and West, this vital difference between Mesopotamian and Hellenic religion must be strongly emphasised: Babylonian liturgy is mainly a service of sorrow, and part of that sorrow is for Tammuz; Hellenic worship was mainly cheerful and social, and only in a few chthonian cults is a gloomier tone discernible, nor can we anywhere hear the outbursts of violent and ecstatic grief. In this respect, and in its remoteness from any idea of the death and resurrection of the deity, Hellenic religion was further removed from that of Catholic Europe than was the old Phrygian or the Sumerian.

The Babylonian temple-service was complex and varied, and offers many problems of interest to the comparative student. We gather that a Holy Marriage was part of a religious drama perhaps performed annually; for instance, we find reference to the solemn nuptials of Ninib and Bau, and to the marriage presents given to Bau.[1] In every anthropomorphic polytheism, especially when idolatry provides images that could be used for religious drama, this ritual act is likely to occur. It is recorded of the southern Arabians in the days before Islam, an ancient inscription speaking of the marriage ceremony of Athtar.[2] It is a marriage of the great God

[1] *Vide* Thureau-Dangin, *Vorderasiatische Bibliothek*, i. p. 77.
[2] Weber, *Arabien vor dem Islam*, p. 19.

and Goddess that according to the most reasonable interpretation is represented on the Hittite reliefs of Boghaz-Keui. We may conjecture that it was a ceremony of Minoan worship; a Mycenaean signet-ring shows us a seated goddess with a young god standing before her and joining his forearm to hers, while both make a peculiar gesture with their fingers that may indicate troth-plighting;[1] also, the later legends and the later ritual commemorating the marriages of Aphrodite and Ariadne may descend from the pre-Hellenic religious tradition. Finally, we have fairly full evidence of the same religious act in purely Hellenic cult. The ἱερὸς γάμος of Zeus and Hera was enacted in many communities with certain traits of primitive custom;[2] the nuptials of Kore and the lower-world god might be found in the ceremonies of certain temples;[3] while the central scene of the Eleusinia, the greater if not the lesser, included a Holy Marriage.[4] The Roman religion, in the original form of which there may have been no marrying or giving in marriage, no family ties or genealogies of divinities, no doubt borrowed its "Orci nuptiae" from the Greek. But for the other cases, there is no need to resort to any theory of borrowing to explain a phenomenon so natural at a certain stage of religion.

Nor is it an important phenomenon, so long as the ceremony was enacted merely by puppets or idols, as in the Boeotian Daidala.[5] It only begins to be of higher significance for the history of religious practice and thought, when the part of one of the divinities in this drama is played by a human representative. For not only does this offer indefinite possibilities of exalta-

[1] *Vide* Evans in *Hell. Journ.*, 1901, p. 176.
[2] *Cults*, i. pp. 184–191.
[3] *Ib.*, iii. pp. 123–124.
[4] *Ib.*, iii. p. 176; cf. vol. iv. p. 34 n. *b*.
[5] *Ib.*, i. pp. 189–190.

tion for the mortal, but it may engender the mystic ideal and practice of communion with the divinity through sexual intercourse, which played a great part in Phrygian religion, and left a deep impress on early Christian symbolism. The question whether the Mesopotamian religion presents us with evidence of a "holy marriage" solemnised between a mortal and the divinity must finally involve the more difficult question as to the function and purpose of that strange Mesopotamian institution of temple-prostitutes. But, leaving this latter alone for the moment, we find explicit testimony in Herodotus to the fact with which we are immediately concerned. In describing the great temple of Bel at Babylon,[1] he asserts, on the authority of his "Chaldean priests," that the deity chose as his nightly partner some native woman, who was supposed to pass the night on the couch with him, and who was obliged to abstain from all other intercourse with men; and he compares a similar practice of belief found in the temple of Zeus in Egyptian Thebes, and in the oracular shrine of Apollo at Patara in Lycia. Now Herodotus' trustworthiness in this matter has been doubted by Assyriologists;[2] nevertheless, a phrase used in the code of Hammurabi concerning a holy woman dedicated to temple service, calling her "a wife of Marduk," seems to give some colour to the Herodotean statement.[3] Only, this term might have merely a spiritual-symbolic significance, like the designation of a nun as "the bride of Christ"; for the original Babylonian documents have supplied as yet, so far as I am aware, no evidence of a woman fulfilling the rôle of Belit, the wife of Bel.

[1] I, 181.
[2] *Vide*, for instance, Dr. Langdon in the *Expositor*, 1909, p. 143.
[3] Winckler, *Die Gesetze Hammurabi*, p. 182.

As regards the adjacent religions, the idea that a mortal might enter into this mode of communion with the divinity was probably an ancient heritage of the Phrygian religions, for it crops up in various forms. The priest of Attis was himself called Attis, and, therefore, probably had loving intercourse with the goddess, and the later mysteries of Kybele extended this idea and offered to every votary the glory of a mystic marriage ;[1] it was the unconscious stimulus of an immemorial tradition that prompted the Phrygian heresiarch Montanus to give himself out as the husband of the Virgin Mary.[2] It also appears as a fundamental tenet of the Sabazian mystery and of the Hellenistic-Egyptian Hermetic theosophy. The simple ritual-fact, namely, that a woman serves as the bride of the god, could probably be traced far afield through many widely distant peoples. According to Sahagun,[3] the human sacrifices of the Mexicans had sometimes the purpose of sending away a woman victim into divine wedlock. In pre-Christian Sweden we find a priestess generally regarded as the wife of the god Freyr, and enjoying considerable power from the connection.[4] Similar examples can be quoted from modern savage communities. Therefore if we find the same institution in the Mediterranean, we shall not think it necessary to suppose that it was an import from Babylon or from any Semitic people. As regards the Minoan worship, it is legitimate at least to regard the legend of Pasiphaë and her amour with the bull-god as an unfortunate

[1] *Vide* Dieterich, *Mithras-Liturgie*, pp. 126–127; Reizenstein, *Die hellenistischen Mysterien-religionen.*

[2] *Vide* Herzog's *Real-Encyclop., s.v.* "Montanismus."

[3] *Jourdanet et Siméon transl. of Sahagun*, pp. 147–148.

[4] Golther, *Handbuch der Germanischen Mythologie*, p. 229; cf. Mannhardt, *Baumkultus*, p. 589.

aetiologic myth distorting the true sense of a ritual in which a mortal woman enjoyed this kind of divine communion, and here again we should mark a religious affinity between Crete and Phrygia. And it is likely that the idea was not unfamiliar to the Hellenes, though the record of it is scanty and uncertain. According to the early Christian fathers, the inspiration of the Pythia of Delphi was due to a corporeal union with Apollo akin at least to—if not identical with—sexual intercourse. Of more value is Herodotus' definite assertion that the priestess of Patara gained her inspiration by her nuptial union with Apollo. In the rare cases where the cult of a Hellenic god was administered by a priestess we may suspect that a ἱερὸς γάμος was part of the temple-ritual; in the two examples that I have been able to find, the cults of Poseidon at Kalaureia and of Heracles at Thespiai, the priestess must be a maiden, as on this theory would be natural.[1] The maiden-priestesses of the Leukippides, the divine brides of the Dioskouroi at Sparta, were themselves called Leukippides; in all probability because they were their mortal representatives in some ceremony of holy marriage.[2] But the most salient and explicitly recorded example is the yearly marriage of the Queen-Archon at Athens with Dionysos, the bull-god, in the feast of Anthesteria, the significance of which I have discussed elsewhere.[3] It seems that the Queen by uniting her body with the god's, unites to him the whole Athenian state and secures its prosperity and fruitfulness; this historic fact may also explain the myth of the union

[1] Pausan., 2, 33, 3; 9, 27, 6; cf. my article in *Archiv. für Religionswiss.*, 1904, p. 74; E. Fehrle, *Die Kultische Keuschheit im Alterthum*, p. 223, gives other examples which appear to me more doubtful.

[2] Paus., 3, 16, 1.

[3] *Cults*, v. pp. 217–219.

of Althaia, Queen of Kalydon, with the same god. Finally, let us observe that nothing in any of these Hellenic records suggests any element of what we should call impurity in the ritual; we are not told that these holy marriages were ever consummated by the priest as the human representative of the god; or that the ceremony involved any real loss of virginity in the maiden-priestess. The marriage could have been consummated symbolically by use of a puppet or image of the deity. We may believe that the rite descends from pre-Homeric antiquity; the ritual which the Queen-Archon performed might naturally have been established at the time of the adoption into Athens of the Dionysiac cult, and there are reasons for dating this event earlier than 1000 B.C.[1]

We now come to a very difficult and important question concerning the position of women in the old Mesopotamian temple-ritual. Our first document of value is the code of Hammurabi, in which we find certain social regulations concerning the status of a class of women designated by a name which Winckler translates doubtfully as "God's-sisters," regarding it, however, as equivalent to consecrated, while Johns translates it merely as "votary."[2] At least, we have proof of a class of holy women who have certain privileges and are under certain restrictions. They were the daughters of good families dedicated by their fathers to religion; they could inherit property, which was exempt from the burden of army-tax; they could not marry, and were prohibited from setting-up or even entering a wine-shop under penalty of death. It is something to know even as much as this about them,

[1] Vide *Cults*, v. p. 109.
[2] Winckler, *op. cit.*, p. 110; Johns, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

but we would very gladly learn more. Is it to their order that the personage described as "the wife of Marduk"[1] belongs, who has been considered above? Is it from among them that the priestesses of Ishtar were chosen, who interpreted the oracles of the goddess?[2] It seems clear that a father could dedicate his daughter to any divinity, that their position was honourable, and that they are not to be identified with the temple-prostitutes of Babylon or Erech, who excited the wonder and often the reprobation of the later Greek world. This peculiar order of temple-harlots is also recognised—according to some of the best authorities[3]—in Hammurabi's code, where they are mentioned in the same context with the "consecrated" or the "God-sisters," and yet are clearly distinct from them; another clause seems to refer to male prostitutes (§ 187). Certain rules are laid down concerning their inheritance of property, and concerning the rearing of their children, if they had any, who might be adopted into private families. Evidently these "Qadishtu" were a permanent institution, and there is no hint of any dishonour. There may be other references in Babylonian literature to these temple-women; in the Epic of Gilgamesh, the courtesan who won over Eabani evidently belongs to the retinue of Ishtar of Erech.

From these two institutions we must distinguish that other, for which Herodotus is our earliest authority:[4] according to his explicit statement, once in her lifetime every Babylonian woman, high or low, had to stand in the temple-precincts of the goddess Mylitta—probably a

[1] Code, § 182.

[2] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, ii. 157.

[3] *Vide* Winckler's interpretation of §§ 178, 180, 181; cf. also Zimmern in *K.A.T.*[3], 423.

[4] 1, 199.

functional appellative of Ishtar, meaning "the helper of childbirth"—and to prostitute herself to any stranger who threw money into her lap and claimed her with the formula, "I invoke the goddess Mylitta for you." Herodotus hastens to assure us that this single act of unchastity—which took place outside the temple—did not afterwards lower the morality of the women, who, as he declares, were otherwise exemplary in this respect. But he is evidently shocked by the custom, and the early Christian and modern writers have quoted it as the worst example of gross pagan or Oriental licentiousness. Some devoted Assyriologists have tried to throw doubt on the historian's veracity:[1] the wish is father to the thought: and it is indeed difficult for the ordinary civilised man to understand how an ancient civilisation of otherwise advanced morality could have sanctioned such a practice. But Herodotus' testimony ought not to be so impugned; nor is it sufficient evidence for rejecting it that no reference to the custom which he describes has been found hitherto in the cuneiform literature. Strabo merely repeats what Herodotus has said; but independent evidence of some value is gathered from the apocryphal Epistle of Jeremias:[2] "The women also with cords about them sit in the ways, burning bran for incense; but if any of them, drawn by some that pass by, lie with them, she reproacheth her fellow that she was not thought as worthy as herself, nor her cord broken." The context is altogether religious, and this is no ordinary secular immorality; certain details in the narrative remind us of Herodotus, and make it clear that the writer has in mind the same social usage that the historian vouches for. This usage may be described as the consecration to the goddess of

[1] *E.g.* Zimmern in *K.A.T.*[3], p. 423. [2] Verse 43.

the first-fruits of the woman's virginity before marriage; for, though Herodotus does not explicitly say that it was a rite preliminary to marriage, yet the records of similar practices elsewhere in Asia Minor assure us on this point.

We have now to begin the comparative search in the adjacent regions, keeping distinct the three types of consecration which I have specified above, which are too often confused.[1]

The first type has its close analogies with the early Christian, mediaeval, and modern conventual life of women. The code of Hammurabi presents us with the earliest example of what may be called the religious sisterhood; the Babylonian votaries were dedicated to religion, and while the Christian nuns are often called the brides of Christ, their earliest prototypes enjoyed the less questionable title of "God's-sisters." We find no exact parallel to this practice in ancient Greece; from the earliest period, no doubt, the custom prevailed of consecrating individual women of certain families as priestesses to serve certain cults, and sometimes chastity was enforced upon them; but these did not form a conventual society; and usually, apart from their occasional religious duties, they could lead a secular life. In fact, the monastic system was of Eastern origin and only reached Europe in later times, being opposed

[1] The first to insist emphatically on the necessity of their distinction was Mr. Hartland, in *Anthropological Essays presented to E. B. Tylor*, pp. 190–191; but he has there, I think, wrongly classified—through a misunderstanding of a phrase in Aelian—the Lydian custom that Herodotus (1, 93) and Aelian (*Var. Hist.*, iv. 1) refer to; both these writers mention the custom of the women of Lydia practising prostitution before marriage. Aelian does not mention the motive that Herodotus assigns, the collection of a dowry; neither associates it with religion. Aelian merely adds that when once married the Lydian women were virtuous; this need have nothing to do with the Mylitta-rite.

to the civic character of the religion of the old Aryan states.

The second class of consecrated women served as temple-harlots in certain cult-centres of Asia Minor. We cannot say that the custom in all cases emanated from Babylon ; for there is reason to think that it was a tradition attaching to the cult of the goddess among the polytheistic Semitic stocks. We have clear allusions in the Bible to temple-prostitution practised by both sexes in the Canaanite communities adjacent to the Israelites, who were themselves sometimes contaminated by the practice.[1] We hear of "hierodouli" among the pagan Arabs,[2] of women "of the congregation of the people of Astarte" at Carthage,[3] of numbers of dedicated slave women in the cult of Aphrodite at Eryx,[4] which was at least semi-Semitic ; and it is likely that some of these at least were devoted to the impure religious practice. As regards non-Semitic worships, it is only clearly attested of two, namely, of the worship of Mā at Comana in Pontos,[5] and of Aphrodite Ourania in Corinth.[6] In these cases we have the right to assume Semitic influences at work ; for we do not find traces of this practice in the ancient cult of Kybele ; and Ma of Cappadocia and Pontus, who had affinities with her, was partly contaminated with Anahita, a Persian goddess, who had taken on Babylonian fashions. Nor can we doubt that the practice gained recognition at Corinth in post-Homeric times through its Oriental trade ; for it was attached to the cult of Aphrodite

[1] *E.g.* Hosea iv. 13 ; Deut. xxiii. 18 ; 1 Kings xiv. 24.
[2] Weber, *Arabien vor dem Islam*, p. 18.
[3] *C. I. Sem.*, 1, 263.
[4] Strab., 272.
[5] Strab., 559.
[6] Pind. *Frag.*, 87 ; Strab., 378 ; (*Cults*, ii. p. 746, R. 99[g]).

Ourania, whose personality, partly at least, was identical with that of the Semitic goddess. The practice survived in Lydia in the later period of the Graeco-Roman culture. For a woman of Tralles, by name Aurelia Aemilia, erected a column with an inscription that has been published by Sir William Ramsay,[1] in which she proclaims with pride that she had prostituted herself in the temple service "at the command of an oracle," and that her female ancestors had done likewise. Finally, we may find the cult-practice reflected in certain legends; in the legend of Iconium, for instance, of the woman who enticed all strangers to her embraces and afterwards slew them, but was herself turned to stone by Perseus, and whose stone image gave the name to the State.[2]

The other custom recorded by Herodotus of Babylon, the consecration of the first-fruits of virginity to the goddess before marriage, which I have considered as distinct from the foregoing, may often have been combined or confused with it; for the temple-harlotry, carried on for some considerable period, might be occasionally a preliminary to marriage. The most exact parallels to the Babylonian custom are found in the records of Byblos, Cyprus, and the Syrian Heliopolis or Baalbec. Lucian attests the rule prevailing at Byblos, that in the festival of Adonis women exposed themselves for purchase on one single day, and

[1] *Cities and Bishoprics*, i. 94. In his comment he rightly points out that the woman is Lydian, as her name is not genuine Roman; but he is wrong in speaking of her service as performed to a god (Frazer, *Adonis*, etc., p. 34, follows him). This would be a unique fact, for the service in Asia Minor is always to a goddess; but the inscription neither mentions nor implies a god. The bride of Zeus at Egyptian Thebes was also a temple-harlot, if we could believe Strabo, p. 816; but on this point he contradicts Herodotus, 1, 182.

[2] *Et. Mag.*, s.v. Ἰκόνιον.

that only strangers were allowed to enjoy them; but that this service was only imposed upon them if they refused to cut off their hair in lamentation for Adonis.[1] Similarly the Byzantine historian Sozomenos declared that at Heliopolis (Baalbec), in the temple of Astarte, each maiden was obliged to prostitute herself before marriage, until the custom and the cult were abolished by Constantine.[2] The statements about Cyprus, though less explicit, point to the same institution: Herodotus, having described at length the Babylonian practice, declares that it prevailed in Cyprus also, and Justin[3] that it was a custom of the Cyprians "to send their virgins before marriage on fixed days to the shore, to earn their dowry by prostitution, so as to pay a first-offering to Venus for their virtue henceforth (pro reliqua pudicitia libamenta Veneri soluturas)." The procession to the shore may indicate the rule that intercourse was only allowed them with strangers,[4] and nothing points to prolonged prostitution. It is probably the same rite that the Locrians of the West vowed to perform in honour of Aphrodite in the event

[1] *De Dea Syr.*, 6; cf. Aug. *De Civ. Dei*, 4, 10: "cui (Veneri) etiam Phoenices donum dabant de prostitutione filiarum, antequam eas jungerent viris": religious prostitution before marriage prevailed among the Carthaginians in the worship of Astarte (Valer. Max., 2, ch. 1, sub. fin.: these vague statements may refer either to defloration of virgins or prolonged service in the temple).

[2] See Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 33, n. 1, quoting Sozomen. *Hist. Eccles.*, 5, 10, 7; Sokrates, *Hist. Eccles.*, 1, 18, 7–9; Euseb. *Vita Constantin.*, 3, 58. Eusebius only vaguely alludes to it. Sokrates merely says that the wives were in common, and that the people had the habit of giving over the virgins to strangers to violate. Sozomenos is the only voucher for the religious aspect of the practice; from Sokrates we gather that the rule about strangers was observed in the rite.

[3] 18, 5.

[4] This is confirmed by the legend given by Apollodoros (*Bibl.*, 3, 14, 3) that the daughters of Kinyras, owing to the wrath of Aphrodite, had sexual intercourse with strangers.

of deliverance from a dangerous war.[1] But in the worship of Anaitis at Akilisene in Armenia, according to Strabo,[2] the unmarried women served as temple-harlots for an indefinite time until they married; and Aurelia Aemilia of Tralles may have been only maintaining the same ancient ritual in Lydia. In these two countries, then, it seems as if there had been a fusion of two institutions that elsewhere were distinct one from another, harlot-service for a prolonged period in a temple, and the consecration of each maiden's virginity as a preliminary to marriage.

Such institutions mark the sharpest antagonism between the early religious sentiment of the East and the West. Of no European State is there any record, religious or other, that the sacrifice before marriage of a woman's virginity to a mortal was at any time regarded as demanded by temple ritual. Such a rite was abhorrent to the genuine Hellenic, as it was to the Hebraic, spirit; and only in later times do we find one or two Hellenic cult-centres catching the taint of the Oriental tradition: while such legends as that of Melanippos and Komaitho and the story of Laokoon's sin express the feeling of horror which any sexual licence in a temple aroused in the Greek.[3]

[1] Justin, 21, 3; Athenaeus, 516 A, speaks vaguely, as if the women of the Lokri Epizephyrii were promiscuous prostitutes.

[2] Pp. 532–533.

[3] The lovers, Melanippos and Komaitho, sin in the temple of Artemis Triklaria of the Ionians in Achaia; the whole community is visited with the divine wrath, and the sinners are offered up as a piacular sacrifice (Paus., 7, 19, 3); according to Euphorion, Laokoon's fate was due to a similar trespass committed with his wife before the statue of Apollo (Serv. *Aen.*, 2, 201). It may be that such legends faintly reflect a very early ἱερὸς γάμος once performed in temples by the priest and priestess: if so, they also express the repugnance of the later Hellene to the idea of it; and in any case this is not the institution that is being discussed.

It is imperative to try to understand the original purpose or significance of the Semitic and Anatolian rites that we have been dealing with. To regard them as the early Christian and some modern writers have done, as mere examples of unbridled Oriental lust masquerading in the guise of religion, is a false and unjust view. According to Herodotus, the same society that ordained this sacrifice of virginity upon the daughters of families maintained in other respects a high standard of virtue, which appears also attested by Babylonian religious and secular documents. Modern anthropology has handled the problem with greater insight and seriousness; but certain current explanations are not convincing. To take the rite described by Herodotus first, which is always to be distinguished from the permanent institution of "hierodulai" in the sense of temple-harlots: Mannhardt, who was the first to apply modern science to the problem, explained it as a development of vegetation-ritual.[1] Aphrodite and Adonis, Ishtar and Tammuz, represent vegetation, and their yearly union causes general fertility; the women are playing the part of the goddess, and the stranger represents Adonis! The Babylonian rite, then, is partly religious μίμησις, the human acting of a divine drama, partly religious magic good for the crops. But in spite of Mannhardt's great and real services to science, his vegetation-theory leads him often astray, and only one who was desperately defending a thesis would explain that stranger, a necessary personage in the ritual at Babylon, Byblos, Cyprus, and Baalbec, as the native god. There is no kind of reason for connecting the Babylonian rite with Tammuz, or for supposing that the women were representing

[1] *Antike Wald u. Feld Kulte*, p. 285, etc.

the goddess,[1] or that their act directly influenced the crops, except in the sense that all due performance of religious ceremonies has been considered at certain stages of belief as favouring the prosperity of the land. Sir William Ramsay, in his *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia*,[2] would explain the custom as preserving the tradition of the communism of women before regular marriage was instituted. Dr. Frazer, who has dealt more fully with the question, accepts this explanation,[3] as he also accepts Mannhardt's in full; and, while he associates—as I think, wrongly—the Babylonian rite with general temple-prostitution, he adds a third suggestion, prompted by his theory of kingship: the king himself might have to mate with one or more of the temple-harlots "who played Astarte to his Adonis": [4] such unions might serve to maintain the supply of human deities, one of whom might succeed to the throne, and another might be sacrificed in his father's stead when religion demanded the life of the royal man-god. I do not find this theory coherent even with itself; and, like the others, it fails to explain all the facts, and, on the other hand, it imagines data which are not given us by the records.

That state of communism when sexual union was entirely promiscuous is receding further and further into the anthropological background: it is dangerous to predicate it of the most backward Anatolian State in any period which can come into our ken. When the Byzantine Sokrates gravely tells us that the men of Heliopolis

[1] Why should not the priestess rather play the part of the goddess, and why, if we trust Plutarch (*Vit. Artaxerx.*, 27), was the priestess of Anaitis at Ekbatana, to whose temple harlots were attached, obliged to observe chastity after election?

[2] Vol. i. pp. 94–96.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 35, etc.

[4] *Op. cit.*, p. 44.

had their wives in common, he does not know what he is saying. And if this sacrifice of virginity before marriage was a recognition of the original rights of all the males of the community, why did not some representative of the community take the virginity, the priest or some head-man? This ill-considered sociologic hypothesis shipwrecks on that mysterious stranger.[1]

Prof. Westermarck, in his *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*,[2] regards the Mylitta-rite as intended to ensure fertility in women through direct appeal to the goddess of fertility, and he explains the formula which the stranger uttered — ἐπικαλέω τοι τὴν θεὸν Μύλιττα —as signifying generally "May the goddess Mylitta prosper thee." Obviously the phrase, "I invoke the goddess for thee," could as naturally mean, "I claim thee in the name of the goddess," the stranger basing his right to the woman on this appeal. But his general theory appears not so unsound as those which have just been noted.

The comparative method ought to help us here; and though we have no exact parallel, as far as I am aware, recorded of any people outside the Mediterranean area to the Babylonian custom, we find usages reported elsewhere that agree with it in one essential. Lubbock quotes instances from modern India of the rule imposed upon women of presenting themselves before marriage in the temple of Juggernaut for the purpose—as he implies—of offering up their virginity, though no such custom is recorded in the Vedic period of religion;[3] cases also are chronicled of the rule prevailing among

[1] I pointed out this objection in an article in the *Archiv. f. Relig. Wissensch.*, 1904, p. 81; Mr. S. Hartland has also, independently, developed it (*op. cit.*, p. 191).

[2] Vol. ii. p. 446.

[3] *Origin of Civilisation*, pp. 535–537.

uncultured or semi-cultured tribes that the medicine-man or the priest should take the virginity of the bride before the marriage ceremony.[1] These are probably illustrations of the working of the same idea as that which inspired the Babylonian custom. Marriage involves the entering upon a new state; change of life is generally dangerous, and must be safeguarded by what Van Gennep has called "rites de passage"; more especially is the sexual union with a virgin dangerous and liable to be regarded with awe by primitive sentiment; before it is safe to marry her, the tabu that is upon her must first be removed by a religious act securing the divinity's sanction for the removal; just as the ripe cornfield must not be reaped before religious rites, such as the consecration of first-fruits, have loosened the tabu upon it: we may believe that Hellenic marriage ritual secured the same end as the Babylonian by what seems to us the more innocent method of offering the προτέλεια. So the Babylonian safeguards the coming marriage by offering the first-fruits of his daughter to the goddess who presides over the powers and processes of life and birth. Under her protection, after appeal to her, the process loses its special danger; or if there is danger still, it falls upon the head of the stranger.[2] For I can find no other way of account-

[1] *Vide* Westermarck, *History of Human Marriage*, p. 76.

[2] Mr. Hartland objects (*loc. cit.*, p. 200) to this explanation on the ground that the stranger would dislike the danger as much as any one else; but the rite may have arisen among a Semitic tribe who were peculiarly sensitive to that feeling of peril, while they found that the usual stranger was sceptical and more venturesome: when once the rule was established, it could become a stereotyped convention. His own suggestion (p. 201) that a stranger was alone privileged, lest the solemn act should become a mere love-affair with a native lover, does not seem to me so reasonable; to prevent that, the act might as well have been performed by a priest. Dr. Frazer in his new edition of *Adonis*, etc. (pp. 50–54), criticises my explanation, which I first put

ing for his presence as a necessary agent, in the ritual of at least four widely separate communities of Semitic race : this comparative ubiquity prevents us explaining it as due to some capricious accidental impulse of delicacy, as if the act would become less indelicate if a stranger who would not continue in the place participated in it.

In his essay on the question, Mr. Hartland explains the Babylonian rite as belonging to the class of puberty-ceremonies ; nor would this account of it conflict with the view here put forth, if, as he maintains, primitive puberty-ceremonies to which girls are subjected are usually preliminary to the marriage which speedily follows.[1] But puberty-ceremonies are generally performed at initiation-mysteries, and none of the rites that we are considering appear to have been associated with mysteries except, perhaps, at Cyprus, where the late record speaks of mysteries instituted by Kinyras that had a sexual significance, and which may have been the occasion of the consecration of virginity that Justin describes ;[2] but the institution of mysteries has not

forth—but with insufficient clearness—in the *Archiv. für Religionswissenschaft* (1904, p. 88), mainly on the ground that it does not naturally apply to general temple-prostitution nor to the prostitution of married women. But it was never meant to apply to these, but only to the defloration of virgins before marriage. Dr. Frazer also argues that the account of Herodotus does not show that the Babylonian rite was limited to virgins. Explicitly it does not, but implicitly it does ; for Herodotus declares that it was an isolated act, and therefore to be distinguished from temple-prostitution of indefinite duration ; and he adds that the same rite was performed in Cyprus, which, as the other record clearly attests, was the defloration of virgins by strangers. Sozomenos and Sokrates attest the same of the Baalbec rite, and Eusebius's vague words are not sufficient to contradict them. One rite might easily pass into the other ; but our theories as to the original meaning of different rites should observe the difference.

[1] But *vide* Gennep, *Les Rites de passage*, p. 190.

[2] Cf. Arnob. *Adv. Gent.*, 5, 19, with Firmic. Matern. *De Error.*, 10, and Clemens, *Protrept.*, c. 2, p. 12, Pott.

yet been proved for any purely Semitic religion. In any case, Mr. Hartland's statement does not explain why the loss of virginity should be considered desirable in a puberty-ceremony or as a preliminary to marriage.

The significance of the action, as I have interpreted it, is negative rather than positive, the avoidance of a vague peril or the removal of a tabu rather than the attainment of the blessing of fertility, as Dr. Westermarck would regard it. And this idea, the removal of a tabu, seems expressed in the phrase of Herodotus[1] by which he describes the state of the woman after the ceremony — ἀποσιωσαμένη τῇ θεῷ; and the parallel that I have suggested, the consecration of the first-fruits of the harvest to remove the tabu from the rest of the crop, is somewhat justified by the words of Justin already quoted—" pro reliqua pudicitia libamenta Veneri soluturas."

As regards the other institution, the maintenance of " hierodoulai " in temples as " consecrated " women, " kadeschim," unmarried, who for a period of years indulged in sexual intercourse with visitors, the original intention and significance of it is hard to decide. We may be sure that it did not originate in mere profligacy, and the inscription of Tralles shows that even in the later Roman period it had not lost its religious prestige.[2] Such a custom could naturally arise in a society that allowed freedom of sexual intercourse among young unmarried persons—and this is not uncommonly found at a primitive level of culture—and that was devoted to the worship of a goddess of sexual fertility. The rituals in the temples of Ishtar of Erech, Anaitis of

[1] I, 199.

[2] The lady who there boasts of her prostitute-ancestresses describes them also as " of unwashed feet " ; and this is a point of asceticism and holiness.

Armenia, Mā of Comana, must have been instituted for some national and social purpose; therefore Mr. Hartland's suggestion, that the original object of the Armenian rite was to give the maidens a chance of securing themselves a suitable husband by experience, seems insufficient. Dr. Frazer's theory, that connects the institution with some of the mystic purposes of kingship,[1] floats in the air; for there is not a particle of evidence showing any relation between these women and the monarch or the royal harem or the monarchical succession or the death of a royal victim. A simpler suggestion is that the "hierodoulai," or temple-women, were the human vehicles for diffusing through the community the peculiar virtue or potency of the goddess, the much-coveted blessing of human fertility. Thus to consecrate slaves or even daughters to this service was a pious social act.

The significance of the facts that we have been examining is of the highest for the history of religious morality, especially for the varied history of the idea of purity. We call this temple-harlotry vile and impure; the civilised Babylonian, who in private life valued purity and morality, called the women "kadistu," that is, "pure" or clean in the ritualistic sense, or as Zimmern interprets the ideogram, "not unclean."[2] In fact, the Mediterranean old-world religions, all save the Hebraic, agreed in regarding the processes of the propagation of life as divine, at least as something not alien or abhorrent to godhead. But the early Christian propagandists, working here on Hebraic lines, intensified the isolation of God from the simple phenomena of birth, thereby engendering at times an anti-sexual bias, and preparing a discord between any possible biological

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 199. [2] *K.A.T.*[3], p. 423.

view and the current religious dogma, and modern ethical thought has not been wholly a gainer thereby.

The subject that has been discussed at some length is also connected with the whole question of ritual-purity and purification. The primitive conception of purity had at an early stage in its evolution been adopted by higher religion; and the essential effect of impurity was to debar a person from intercourse with God and with his fellow-men. Hence arises a code of rules to regulate temple-ritual. So far as I am aware, the Babylonian rules for safeguarding the purity of the shrines were not conspicuously different from the Greek or the Hebraic.[1] The taint of bloodshed and other physical impurities was kept aloof; and it is in the highest degree probable that the function of the "hetairai" was only performed outside the temple, for Herodotus specially tells us that this rule was observed in the Mylitta-rite. The cathartic methods of East and West agree in many points. The use of holy water for purifying purposes was known to the early Greeks.[2] It was still more in evidence in the Babylonian ritual: the holy water of the Euphrates or Tigris was used for a variety of purposes, for the washing of the king's hands before he touched the statues, for the washing of the idol's mouths,[3]

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 163. The writer of the late apocryphal document, "The Epistle of Jeremy," makes it a reproach to the Babylonian cult that "women set meat before the gods" (v. 30), and "the menstruous woman and the woman in child-bed touch their sacrifices" (v. 29), meaning, perhaps, that there was nothing to prevent the Babylonian priestess being in that condition. But we cannot trust him for exact knowledge of these matters. Being a Jew, he objects to the ministration of women. The Babylonian and Hellene were wiser, and admitted them to the higher functions of religion.

[2] Vide *Cults*, iv. p. 301.

[3] *Vide* Inscription of Sippar in British Museum, concerning the re-establishment of cult of Shamash by King Nabupaladdin, 884–860 B.C. (Jeremias, *Die Cultus-Tafel von Sippar*).

perhaps also for baptism. For we hear of some such rite in a hymn to Enlil translated by Dr. Langdon[1]—the line that he renders "Son whom in the sacred bowl she baptized," seems to refer to a human child. Ablution was prominent also in the exorcism-ritual, and the "House of Washing" or "House of Baptism" was the centre of a liturgy that had for its object deliverance from demons.[2] The whole State was at times purified by water.[3] And in all this ritual the water must itself be of a peculiar purity—rain-water, for instance,[4] or the water of the Euphrates, whence came probably the Water of Life that was kept in Marduk's temple with which the Gods and the Annunaki washed their faces, and which was used in the feast of the Doom-fixing.[5] According to the Babylonian view ordinary water was naturally impure (we may well believe that it was so at Babylon, where the river and canals were so pressed into the service of man), and a person incurred impurity by stepping over a puddle or other unpurified water.[6] The Greek did not need to be so scrupulous, for most water in his land was naturally pure, being spring or brook; yet in his cathartic rules we find often that only a special water was suitable for the religious purpose, running water especially, or sea-water, or in a particular locality one sacred fountain only.[7] But though it was to him as to most

[1] *Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms*, p. 75.

[2] *Vide* Langdon in *Transactions of Congress for the History of Religions* (1908), vol. i. p. 250.

[3] Vide *Zeitung für Assyriologie*, 1910, p. 157.

[4] Formula for driving out the demon of sickness, "Bread at his head place, rain-water at his feet place" (Langdon, *ib.* p. 252).

[5] Delitsch, *Wörterbuch*, i. 79–80.

[6] *Zeit. für Assyr.*, 1910, p. 157.

[7] *Vide* Hippocrates (*Littré*), vi. 362; Stengel, *Griechischer Kultusaltertümer* (Iwan Müller's Handbuch, p. 110).

peoples, the simple and natural means of purification, he did not apply it to such various cathartic purposes as the Babylonian. Nor as far as we can discover had he developed in old days the interesting rite of baptism: we hear of it first in the records of the fifth century, and in relation to alien cults like that of the Thracian goddess Kotytto.[1]

Equally prominent in the cathartic ritual of Mesopotamia was the element of fire: in the prayer that followed upon the purification-ceremonies we find the formula, "May the torch of the gleaming Fire-God cleanse me."[2] The Fire-God, Nusku, is implored "to burn away the evil magicians,"[3] and we may believe that he owes his development and exalted position as a high spiritual god to the ritual use of fire, just as in the Vedic religion did Agni. The conception of fire as a mighty purifying element, which appears in the Old and New Testaments and in Christian eschatology, has arisen, no doubt, from the cathartic ritual of the ancient Semites. Doubtless also the spiritual or magic potency of this element was known in ancient Europe: it is clearly revealed in the primitive ceremonies of the old German "Notfeuer," with which the cattle, fields, and men were purified in time of pestilence.[4] And there are several indications of its use in Greek cathartic ritual; a noteworthy example is the purification of Lemnos by the bringing of holy fire from Delos;[5] the curious Attic ritual of running with the new-born babe round the

[1] Referred to in the comedy of Eupolis called the "Baptai."

[2] Jastrow, *op. cit.*, p. 500.

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 297, 487; the priest-exorciser, the Ashipu, uses a brazier in the expulsion of demons.

[4] *Vide* Golther, *Handbuch der Germanischen Mythologie*, p. 580; cf. my *Cults*, v. p. 196.

[5] *Cults*, vol. v. pp. 383–384; cf. iv. p. 301.

hearth, called the Amphidromia, may have had a similar intention;[1] even the holy water, the χέρνιψ, seems to have been hallowed by the insertion of a torch;[2] and in the later records fire is often mentioned among the usual implements of cleansing.[3] The Eleusinian myth concerning Demeter holding the infant Demophon in the flame to make him immortal was suggested probably by some purificatory rite in which fire was used. Finally, the fire-ordeal, which was practised both in Babylonia and Greece,[4] may have been associated at a certain period with the cathartic properties of fire. Nevertheless, the Hellenic divinities specially concerned with this element, Hestia and Hephaistos, had little personal interest in this ritual, and did not rise to the same height in the national theology as Nusku rose in the Babylonian.

We might find other coincidences in detail between Hellenic and Assyrian ritual, such as the purificatory employment of salt, onions, and the sacrificial skin of the animal-victim.[5] One of the most interesting phenomena presented by the cathartic law of old Babylonia

[1] *Cults*, v. p. 356; cf. p. 363 (the purifying animal carried round the hearth).

[2] Eur. *Herc. Fur.*, 928.

[3] Dio Chrys. *Or.*, 48 (Dind., vol. ii. p. 144), περικαθήραντες τὴν πόλιν μὴ σκίλλῃ μηδὲ δαδί, πολὺ δὲ καθαρωτέρῳ χρήματι τῷ λόγῳ (cf. Lucian, *Menipp.*, c. 7, use of squills and torches in "katharsis," (?) Babylonian or Hellenic); Serv. *ad Aen.*, 6, 741, "in sacris omnibus tres sunt istae purgationes, nam aut taeda purgant aut sulphure aut aqua abluunt aut aere ventilant."

[4] "To take fire and swear by God" is a formula that occurs in the third tablet of Surpu; *vide* Zimmern, *Beiträge zur Kenntniss Babyl. Relig.*, p. 13; cf. Soph. *Antig.*, 264.

[5] Salt used as a means of exorcism in Babylonia as early as the third millennium (*vide* Langdon, *Transactions of Congress Hist. Relig.*, 1908, vol. i. p. 251); the fell "of the great ox" used to purify the palace of the king (*vide* Zimmern, *Beitrage*, p. 123; compare the Διὸς κώδιον in Greek ritual).

is a rule that possessed an obvious moral value; we find, namely, on one of the cylinders of Gudea, that during the period when Gudea was purifying the city the master must not strike the slave, and no action at law must be brought against any one; for seven days perfect equality reigned, no bad word was uttered, the widow and the orphan went free from wrong.[1] The conception underlying this rule is intelligible: all quarrelling and oppression, being often accompanied with bloodshed and death, disturbs the general purity which is desired to prevail; and I have indicated elsewhere a similar law regulating the conduct of the Eleusinian mysteries and the Dionysiac festival at Athens, both ceremonies of cathartic value,[2] and I have pointed out a similar ordinance observed recently by a North-American Indian tribe, and formerly by the Peruvians; to these instances may be added the statement by Livy,[3] that in the Roman "lectisternia," when a table with offerings was laid before the gods, no quarrelling was allowed and prisoners were released, and the historian gives to the institution of the lectisternia a piacular significance.

We must also bear in mind certain striking differences between the Hellenic and the Babylonian cathartic systems. In certain purification-ceremonies of Hellas, those in which the homicide was purged from his stain, the washing with the blood of the piacular victim was the most potent means of grace.[4] We may find analogies in Vedic, Roman, and Hebraic ritual, but hitherto none have been presented by the religious documents

[1] *Vide* Thureau-Dangin, *Cylindres de Goudéa*, pp. 29, 93.

[2] Vide *Evolution of Religion*, pp. 113, 114, 117; *Cults*, v. p. 322 (Schol. Demosth., 22, p. 68).

[3] 5, 13, 6.

[4] Vide *Cults*, iii. pp. 303–304; *Evolution of Religion*, p. 121.

of Babylon, where, as has been already pointed out, scarcely any mystic use appears to have been made of the blood of the victim.[1] Again, the Babylonian purification included the confession of sins, a purgation unknown and apparently unnatural to the Hellene ;[2] and generally the Babylonian, while most of its methods, like the Hellenic, are modes of transference or physical riddance of impurity, had a higher spiritual and religious significance ; for it includes lamentations for sin and prayers to the divinity that are not mentioned in the record of any Greek " katharsis."

A long ritual-document is preserved containing the details of the purification of the king :[3] certain forms agree with the Hellenic, but one who was only versed in the latter would find much that was strange and unintelligible both in the particulars and in general atmosphere. We discern an interesting mixture of magic and religion. The gods are partly entreated, partly bribed, partly constrained ; and at the end the evil is physically expelled from the palace. The purifier puts on dark garments, just as the ministers of the underworld-deities did occasionally in Greece. The king himself performs much of the ceremony, and utters words of power : " May my sins be rent away, may I be pure and live before Shamash." The ordering of the cathartic apparatus is guided partly by astrology. It is curious also to find that every article used in the process is identified by name with some divinity : the cypress is the god Adad, the fragrant spices the god Ninib, the censer the god Ib, etc. ; and the commentary that accompanies the ritual-text explains that these

[1] *Vide supra*, p. 146.

[2] Vide *Cults*, iii. p. 167.

[3] Published in Zimmern's *Beiträge*, p. 123 ; cf. Weber, *Dämonenbeschwörung*, pp. 17–19.

substances compel the deities thus associated with them to come and give aid.

In fact, the differences between East and West in this religious sphere are so important that we should not be able to believe that the cathartic system of Greece was borrowed from Babylonia, even if the points of resemblance were much more numerous and striking than they are. For it would be possible to draw up a striking list of coincidences between Hellenic and Vedic cathartic rites, and yet no one would be able on the strength of it to establish a hypothesis of borrowing.

In any case, it may be said, the question of borrowing does not arise within the narrow limits of our inquiry, which is limited to the pre-Homeric period, since all Greek "katharsis" is post-Homeric. The latter dictum is obviously not literally true, as a glance through the Homeric poems will prove. Homer is aware of the necessity of purification by water before making prayer or libation to the gods: Achilles washes his hands and the cups before he pours forth wine and prays to Zeus,[1] Telemachos washes his hands in sea-water before he prays to Athena[2]; and there is a significant account of the purification of the whole Achaean host after the plague;[3] as the later Greeks would have done, the Achaeans throw away into the sea their λύματα, the infected implements of purification, wool or whatever they used, that absorbed the evil from them. But it has been generally observed that Homer does not appear to have been aware of any need for purification from the stain of bloodshed or from the ghostly contagion of death. It is true that Odysseus purifies his hall with fire and sulphur after slaying the suitors, but we are not sure that the act had any further significance than

[1] *Il.*, xvi. 228. [2] *Od.*, ii. 261. [3] *Il.*, i. 313.

the riddance of the smell of blood from the house. Sulphur is there called *κακῶν ἄκος*,[1] "a remedy against evil things"; but we cannot attach any moral or spiritual sense to *κακὰ*, nor is Homeric *κάθαρσις* related, as far as we can see, to any animistic belief. There is one passage where Homer's silence is valuable and gives positive evidence; Theoklumenos, who has slain a man of his own tribe and fled from his home, in consequence approaches Telemachos when the latter is sacrificing and implores and receives his protection: there is no hint of any feeling that there is a stain upon him, or that he needs purification, or that his presence pollutes the sacrifice.[2] All this would have been felt by the later Greek; and in the post-Homeric period we have to reckon with a momentous growth of the idea of impurity and of a complex system of purification, especially in regard to homicide, leading to important developments in the sphere of law and morality which I have tried to trace out on other occasions.[3] But Homer may well be regarded as the spokesman of a gifted race, the Achaeans, as we call them, on whom the burden of the doctrine of purification lay lightly, and for whom the ghostly world had comparatively little terror or interest. Besides the Achaeans, however, and their kindred races there was the submerged population of the older culture who enter into the composition of the various Hellenes of history. Therefore the varied development in the post-Homeric period of cathartic ideas may be only a renaissance, a recrudescence of forces that were active enough in the second millennium.

[1] *Od.*, xxii. 481: In the passage referred to above, Achilles uses sulphur to purify the cups.

[2] *Od.*, xiii. 256–281: This is rightly pointed out by Stengel in his *Griechische Kultusaltertümer*, p. 107.

[3] *Evolution of Religion*, pp. 139–152; *Cults*, iv. pp. 295–306.

Attica may have been the home where the old tradition survived, and cathartic rites such as the Thargelia and the trial of the axe for murder in the Bouphonia have the savour of great antiquity. May not the Minoan religion of Crete have been permeated with the ideas of the impurity of bloodshed and the craving for purification from sin? For at the beginning of the historic period Crete seems to have been the centre of what may be called the cathartic mission; from this island came Apollo Delphinios, the divine purifier *par excellence*, to this island the god came to be purified from the death of Python; and in later times, Crete lent to Athens its purifying prophet Epimenides.[1] If we believe, then, that the post-Homeric blood-purification was really a recrudescence of the tradition of an older indigenous culture, we should use this as another argument for the view that the Greece of the second millennium was untouched or scarcely touched by Babylonian influence. For, as we have seen, purification by blood or from blood appears to have been wholly alien to Babylonian religious and legal practice.

The ritual of purification belongs as much to the history of magic as religion. Now, the student of religion is not permitted to refuse to touch the domain of magic; nor can we exclude its consideration even from the highest topics of religious speculation. Some general remarks have already been made[2] concerning the part played by magic both in the worship and in the

[1] Vide *Cults*, iv. pp. 144–147, 300: To suppose that Hellas learnt its cathartic rites from Lydia, because Herodotus (i. 35) tells us that in his time the Lydians had the Hellenic system of purification from homicide, is less natural. Lydia may well have learnt it from Delphi in the time of Alyattes or Croesus. Or it may have survived in Lydia as a tradition of the early "Minoan" period; and, similarly, it may have survived in Crete.

[2] *Vide supra*, pp. 176–178.

social life of the peoples that we are comparing. Any exact and detailed comparison would be fruitless for our present purpose; for, while the knowledge of early Babylonian magic is beginning to be considerable, we cannot say that we know anything definite concerning the practices in this department of the Hellenic and adjacent peoples in the early period with which we are dealing. From the Homeric poems we can gather little more than that magic of some kind existed; and that Homer and his gifted audience probably despised it as they despised ghosts and demons. It is only by inference that we can venture to ascribe to the earliest period of the Greek race some of the magic rites that are recorded by the later writers. It would require a lengthy investigation and treatise to range through the whole of Greek ritual and to disentangle and expose the magic element which was undoubtedly there, and which in some measure is latent in the ritual of every higher religion yet examined. By way of salient illustration we may quote the ceremonies of the scapegoat and the φαρμακός,[1] modes of the magic-transference of sin and evil; the strewing of sacred food-stuff that is instinct with divine potency over the fields in the Thesmophoria; the rain magic performed by the priests of Zeus Lykaios;[2] we hear at Kleonai of an official class of "Magi" who controlled the wind and the weather by spells, and occasionally in their excitement gashed their own hands, like the priests of Baal;[3] such blood-magic being explicable as a violent mode of discharging personal energy upon the outer objects which one wishes to subdue to one's will. Another and more

[1] Vide *Cults*, iv. pp. 268–284.
[2] For similar practices, vide *Cults*, pp. 415–417.
[3] Clem. Alex. *Strom.*, p. 755, Pott.

thrilling example of blood-magic is the process of water-finding by pouring human blood about the earth, a method revealed by an old legend of Haliartos in Boeotia about the man who desired water, and in order to find it consulted Delphi, and was recommended by the oracle to slay the first person who met him on his return; his own young son met him first, and the father stabbed him with his sword; the wounded youth ran round about, and wherever the blood dripped water sprang up from the earth.[1] No one will now venture to say that all these things are post-Homeric; the natural view is that they were an inheritance of crude and primitive thought indigenous to the land. Many of them belong to world-wide custom; on the other hand, some of the striking and specialised rites, such as the blood-magic and the ritual of the φαρμακός, are not found at Babylon.

But before prejudging the question, some salient and peculiar developments of Babylonian magic ought to be considered. One great achievement of Mesopotamian civilisation was the early development of astrology, to which perhaps the whole world has been indebted for good and for evil, and which was associated with magic and put to magic uses. Astrological observation led to the attachment of a magic value to numbers and to certain special numbers, such as number seven. Whether the Judaic name and institution of the Sabbath is of Babylonian origin or not, does not concern our question. But it concerns us to know that the seventh days, the 14th, the 21st, and 28th of certain months, if not of all, were sacred at Babylon, and were days of penance and piacular duties when ordinary occupation was suspended.[2] We can discern the origin of the sanctity of this number: the observation of the

[1] Paus., 9, 33, 4. [2] For the facts *vide* Zimmern, *K.A.T.*[3], p. 592.

seven planets, and the division of the lunar month into four quarters of seven days. The early Greeks, doubtless, had their astrological superstitions, as most races have had; the new moon is naturally lucky, the waning moon unlucky; but no one can discover any numerical or other principle in the Hesiodic system, which is our earliest evidence of Hellenic lucky and unlucky days. His scheme is presented in naïve confusion, and he concludes humorously, "one man praises one day, one another, and few know anything about it." [1] His page of verse reflects the anarchy of the Greek calendars; and we should find it hard to credit that either Hesiod or the legislators that drew up those had sat attentively at the feet of Babylonian teachers. But a few coincidences may be noted. Hesiod puts a special tabu on the fifth day of the month; in fact, it is the only one in his list that is wholly unlucky, a day when it would seem to be best to do nothing at all, at least outside the house, for on this day the Erinyes are wandering about.[2] Now, a Babylonian text published by Dr. Langdon contains the dogma that on the fifth day of Nisan "he who fears Marduk and Zarpanit shall not go out to work." [3] This Babylonian rule is the earliest example of what may be strictly called Sabbatarianism, abstinence from work through fear of offending the high god. Such would probably not be the true account of Hellenic feeling concerning the "forbidden days," which were called ἀποφράδες or μιαραί.[4] The high god had issued to the Hellene no moral commandment about "keeping the Sabbath-day holy"; his reluctance to do certain work on certain days rested on a more primitive senti-

[1] *Works and Days*, l. 824. [2] *Ib.*, l. 804.
[3] *Expositor*, 1909, p. 156.
[4] *Vide* Photius and Hesych., *s.v.* Μιαραὶ ἡμέραι.

ment concerning them. Thus it was unlucky both for himself and the city that Alcibiades should return to the Piraeus when the Plynteria were going on; for this latter was a cathartic ceremony, and evil influences were abroad. Nor, as Xenophon declares, would any one venture to engage in a serious work on this day.[1] Nor were these μιαραὶ ἡμέραι, like the seventh days of the Babylonian months, necessarily days of gloom when offended deities had to be propitiated; on the contrary, the day of Χόες was a day of merry drinking and yet μιαρά: in fact, we best understand the latter phrase by translating it "tabooed," rather than "sad" or "gloomy."[2]

Another coincidence that may arrest attention is that in Hesiod's scheme the seventh day of the month was sacred because Apollo was born on it; and throughout the later period this god maintains his connection with the seventh day, also apparently with the first, the fourteenth, and the twentieth of the month.[3] This almost coincides with the Sabbatical division of the Babylonian months. But we cannot suppose that in Hellas these were days of mortification as they were in the East; else they would not have been associated with the bright deity Apollo.

Such dubious coincidences, balanced by still more striking diversities, are but frail supports for the hypothesis of race-contact.

In Babylonian thaumaturgy nothing is more significant than the magic power of the Word, whether spoken or written: and the Word, as we have noted, was raised to a cosmic divine power and possessed inherent creative force.[4] This is only a reflection upon the heavens of the human use of the magical or mesmeric word or set

[1] *Hell.*, I, 4, 12.
[2] Vide *Cults*, v. pp. 215–216.
[3] *Cults*, iv. p. 259.
[4] *Vide supra*, pp. 176–177.

of words. This use of them is found, indeed, all round the globe. What seems unique in the Mesopotamian culture is that religion, religious literature, and poetry should have reached so high a pitch and yet never have risen above or shaken off the magic which is its constant accompaniment. Men and gods equally use magic against the demons; the most fervid hymn of praise, the most pathetic litany, is only part of an exorcism-ritual; and so inevitably does the shadow of magic dog religion here that Dr. Langdon is justified in his conjecture[1] that in a great hymn to Enlil, which contains scarcely a prayer but chiefly ecstatic description of his power, the worshipper is really endeavouring to charge himself with higher religious magic by this outpouring. In fact, here and elsewhere, a magic origin for the practice of theologic exegesis may be obscurely traced; narrative might acquire an apotropaeic effect; thus tablets containing the narrative of the achievements of the plague-god, hung up before the houses, could avert pestilence,[2] or, again, the reading aloud the tablet narrating the victory of Shamash and Ramman over the seven demons who attacked the moon-god Sin served to defeat the seven demons by the same sympathetic magic as would be worked by a dramatic representation of that event.[3]

There is no record or hint that the Hellenes recited hymns to Demeter or wrote up passages of Homer to avert demons.

It belongs to the magic use of formulae that minute exactness in respect of every syllable is necessary to the power of the spell or the spell-prayer. An Assyrian

[1] *Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms*, p. 196.
[2] King, *Babylonian Religion*, p. 196.
[3] *Vide* Fossey, *La Magie Assyrienne*, p. 96.

king who is consulting the sun-god concerning success in a war with which he is threatened, prays that the ritual which the enemy may be employing may go wrong and fail ; and in this context occurs the curious petition, " May the lips of the priest's son hurry and stumble over a word." [1] The idea seems to be that a single slip in the ritual-formulae destroyed their whole value ; and such a view belongs to magic rather than to religion.

Now it is probable that in his earliest mental stage the Hellene had been in bondage to the religious magic of sacred formulae and sacred names ; and as a tradition of that stage, the divine epithet whereby he appealed to his deities according to his needs retained always for him a mysterious potency ; but otherwise we have no proof that he worked word-magic by means of his sacred texts.

Babylonian sorcery, whether legitimate or illegitimate, was intended to work upon or through demons ; and its familiarity with the names and special qualities of demons is its peculiar mark. In the ritual of exorcism of the demons, idols play a prominent and often singular rôle. The following performance is probably unique : in the exorcism of disease two idols, male and female, were set up before the sick man, then the evil spirits of sickness are invited thus : " Oh ye all wicked, all evil, who pursue so-and-so, if thou art male, here is thy wife ; if thou art female, here is thy husband." [2] The intent of the exorciser seems to be to attract the demon of disease, of whose sex he is not sure, into one or the other of these images, and he lures it by amorous enticement into the figure of opposite sex to its own ;

[1] Knudtzon, *Assyrische Gebete an den Sonnengott*, p. 78 (texts belonging to period of Asarhaddon, *circ.* 681).

[2] Zimmern, *Beiträge*, etc., p. 161.

having got the demon into the image, he doubtless takes it out and burns or buries it. Or the evil spirit may be attracted from the patient by means of its own image placed near him. One document prescribes various images of bestial form, all of which are to be taken by night to the bank of the river, probably that they may be thrown in and carry the impurity of sickness away.[1] Another shows us how to deal with Labartu, the daughter of Anu ;[2] her image, made of clay, is placed above the head of the sick man, so as to draw her or her power out from him ; it is then taken out, slain, and buried. And this exorcism is all the more notable because Labartu is rather an evil goddess than a mere demon, being styled in another text "August lady," "Mistress of the dark-haired men."[3] Such magical drama, in which the demon-image might be slain to annul its potency, seems characteristically Babylonian : it entered also into the ritual of the high gods. For, at the feast of the New Year, when Nebo arrived from Borsippa, two images are brought before him and in his presence decapitated with the sword. Dr. Langdon interprets them[4] as representing probably "the demons who aided the dragon in her fight with Marduk ; they are the captive gods of darkness which ends with the Equinox." This is dramatic magic helpful to the gods.

The elaboration of exorcism must have led to a minuter articulation of the demon-world ; the exorciser is most anxious to know and discover all about his unseen foes : he gives them a name, a sex if possible, and a number : he says of the powerful storm-demons

[1] Zimmern, *Beiträge*, etc., p. 163.
[2] Fossey, *op. cit.*, p. 399.
[3] iv. *R.* 56, 12 ; Fossey, *op. cit.*, p. 401.
[4] *Expositor*, 1909, p. 150, giving text from iv. *R.* 40.

Utuk "they are seven, they are seven, they are neither male nor female, they take no wife and beget no children;" [1] for knowledge of the name or nature of the personality gives magic power.

Many of these examples, which might easily be multiplied, show us magic applied to private but beneficent purposes, the healing of disease, the exorcism of spirits of moral and physical evil. It was also in vogue for national purposes—for instance, for the destruction of the enemies of the king; one of our documents describes such a process as the making of a tallow-image of the enemy of the king and binding his face with a cord, so as to render the living foe impotent of will and speech.[2]

We have already noticed that the Babylonian gods themselves work magic, and that it was also worked on behalf of the gods.[3] And in the ritual-records much that might be interpreted as religion may find its truer account from the other point of view; for instance, the ritual of placing by the bedside of a sick man the image of Nergal or those of the "twins who overthrow the wicked Gallu" [4] might appear at first sight as a religious appeal to the deities to come to his aid; but as in form it is exactly similar to the use made on the same occasion, as noted above, of the images of demons, we may rather suppose that the intention was magical in this act also, and that the divine idols were supposed to combat the demon of sickness by their magical influence. Or, again, in part of the ritual of exorcism we find acts that bear the semblance of sacrifice, such as throwing onions and dates into the fire; but they were charged with a curse before thrown, and the act

[1] Fossey, *op. cit.*, p. 209.
[2] Zimmern, *Beiträge*, p. 173.
[3] *Supra*, p. 176.
[4] Zimmern, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

is more naturally interpreted as a magic transference of evil.[1]

For the purpose of the exorcism, to deliver a "banned" person, the high god, Marduk or another, might be called in; but Marduk also works the effect by magic: a rope is woven by Ishtar's maidens, which Marduk (or his priest) turns round the head of the sufferer, then breaks it through and throws it out into the desert.[2] This looks like symbolic magic; the knotted rope represents the ban, which is then broken and thrown away.

There are many features in these methods of exorcism, such as the apotropaeic use of idols, that are common to other peoples at a certain stage of culture; there remains much also that seems peculiar to Babylon.

But what is uniquely characteristic of this Mesopotamian people, and at the same time most un-Hellenic, is the all-pervading atmosphere of magic, which colours their view of life and their theory of the visible and invisible world. Babylonia, at least, was the one salient exception to the historic induction that a distinguished writer[3] has recently sanctioned—"religion once firmly established invariably seeks to exclude magic; and the priest does his best to discredit the magician." The psalmody of Babylon, with its occasional outbursts

[1] Zimmern, *Beiträge*, pp. 30–31; he mentions also the similar practice of tying up a sheepskin or a fillet of wool and throwing it into the fire.

[2] Zimmern, *op. cit.*, p. 33: note magic use of knots in general, *vide* Frazer, *G.B.*[2], vol. i. pp. 392–403; *Archiv. für Religionsw.*, 1908, pp. 128, 383, 405. The superstition may have prevailed in Minoan Crete (see A. Evans, *Annual British School*, 1902–1903, pp. 7–9) and was in vogue in ancient Greece.

[3] W. Warde Fowler, *The Religious Experiences of the Roman People*, Gifford Lectures, p. 49.

of inspiration and its gleams of spiritual insight, would have appealed to an Isaiah; its magic would have appealed to many a modern African. The Babylonian prophet does not frown on it; the high gods accept it, the priest is its skilled and beneficent practitioner. And at no other point, perhaps, is the contrast between the Hellenic and the Mesopotamian religions so glaring as at this.

This comparison of Eastern and Western ritual may close with some observations on another religious function that may be of some value for the question of early ethnic influence.

It has been remarked that divination played an important, perhaps a dominant part in the Babylonian ritual of sacrifice, divination, that is, by inspection of the victim's entrails, especially the liver; and that this method was adopted in Greece only in the later centuries.[1] But there are other salient differences between the Babylonian and the more ancient mantic art of Hellas.[2] Another method much in vogue in the former was a curious mode of divining by mixing oil and water and watching the movements and behaviour of the two liquids.[3] The first and only indication of a similar practice in Hellas is a passage in the *Agamemnon* of Æschylus, of which the true meaning has hitherto escaped the interpreters.[4] And here, as usual, an obvious example of Mesopotamian influence on Hellenic custom belongs only to a late epoch. It is also true

[1] *Vide supra*, pp. 248–249; *Cults*, iv. p. 191.

[2] For the main facts relating to the Babylonian system and the "baru"-priests, *vide* Zimmern, *Beiträge*, etc., pp. 82–92; for the Hellenic, vide *Cults*, iv. 190–192, 224–231; also vol. iii. 9–12.

[3] The documentary evidence, from a very early period, is given by Zimmern, *Beiträge*, etc., pp. 85–97.

[4] L. 322: Clytemnestra speaks of pouring oil and vinegar into the same vessel and reproaching them for their unsociable behaviour.

that the ancient divination of the two peoples agreed in certain respects, namely, in that both used, like most communities at a certain stage of culture, the auguries of birds and the revelations of dreams. As regards the facts relating to the former, we know more about Greece than at present about Babylon. But in the matter of dream-oracles, it is manifest that the Hellenic phenomena are entirely independent of Mesopotamian fashion. The Assyrian and Babylonian documents reveal the fashion of dream-prophecy in its simplest and highest form: the high deity of his own pleasure sends a dream, and the divining priest or skilled interpreter interprets it. No hint has so far been detected of that artificial method of provoking prophetic dreams by "incubation" or ἐγκοίμησις, the fashion of laying oneself down in some sacred shrine and sleeping with one's ear to the ground, that was much in vogue in ancient Hellas and still survives in parts of the modern Greek world and which may be regarded as an immemorial tradition. In this divination, the divine spokesman was the power of the underworld. And this was the most important difference between the Western and the Eastern society in respect of the divine agency. In an early period of Hellenic history that may be called pre-Apolline, the earth-mother was conspicuously oracular by the vehicle of dreams; and this power of hers was generally shared by the nether god and buried heroes. Nor could the religion of Apollo suppress this "chthonian" divination. But in Mesopotamia the earth-powers and the nether world have no part or lot in this matter. It is almost the prerogative of Shamash, the sun-god, though Adad is sometimes associated with him;[1]

[1] We have also one example of an oracle of Ishtar (in plain prose), *Keil. Bibl.*, ii. p. 179.

both being designated as "Bēlē-Biri" or "Lords of Oracles."[1]

Another remarkable distinction is the fact that the ecstatic or enthusiastic form of prophecy, that of the Shaman or Pythoness possessed and maddened by the inworking spirit of god, is not found in the Babylonian record, which only attests the cool and scientific method of interpreting by signs and dreams and the stars. Perhaps Mesopotamia from the third millennium onward was too civilised to admit the mad prophet and prophetess to its counsels. But such characters were attached to certain Anatolian cults, especially to those of Kybele,[2] and also to the Syrian goddess at Hierapolis;[3] we have evidence of them also in a record of the Cretan Phaistos in the service of the Great Mother.[4] Some scholars have supposed that prophetic ecstasy was only a late phenomenon in Hellas, because Homer is silent about it. But there are reasons for suspecting that demoniac possession was occasionally found in the pre-Homeric divination of Hellas,[5] an inheritance perhaps from the pre-Hellenic period.

In any case, the theory that primitive Hellas was indebted to Babylonia for its divination-system is strongly repugnant to the facts.

[1] Zimmern, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
[2] *Cults*, iii. p. 297.
[3] Lucian, *De Dea Syr.*, 43.
[4] *Cults*, iii. p. 297.
[5] Vide *Cults*, iv. pp. 191–192; iii. p. 11.

CHAPTER XIV.

Summary of Results.

This comparative exposition of the Sumerian-Babylonian and the most complex and developed pre-Christian religion of Europe cannot claim to be complete or at any point finally decisive, but it may at least have helped to reveal the high value and interest of these phenomena for the workers in this broad field of inquiry. This was one of the main objects of this course. The other was the discussion of a question of religious ethnology, concerning the possible influence of Mesopotamia on the earliest development of Hellenic religion. The verdict must still remain an open one, awaiting the light of the new evidence that the future will gather. But the evidence at present available—and it may be hoped that none of first importance has been missed—constrains us to a negative answer or at least a negative attitude of mind.

Confining ourselves generally to the second millennium B.C., we have surveyed the religions of the adjacent peoples between the valley of the Euphrates and the western shores of the Aegean; and have observed that morphologically they are generally on the same plane of polytheism, but that those of Mesopotamia and Hellas reveal inner differences, striking and vital enough to be serious stumbling-blocks to a theory of affiliation. These differences concern the

personality of the divinities and their relations to the various parts of the world of nature; the most salient being the different attitude of the two peoples to the divine luminaries of heaven and to the chthonian powers of the lower world. They concern the cosmogonies of East and West, their views of the creation of the world, and the origin of man; on these matters, certain myths which are easily diffused do not appear to have reached Hellas in this early period. They concern the religious temperaments of the Babylonian and Hellene, which appear as separate as the opposite points of the pole; the rapturous fanatic and self-abasing spirit of the East contrasting vividly with the coolness, civic sobriety, and self-confidence of the West. They concern the eschatologic ideas of the two peoples: the cult of the dead and some idea of a posthumous judgment being found in early Hellas, while the former was rare, and the latter is scarcely discoverable, in Mesopotamia. They concern, finally, the ritual; and here the salient points of contrast are the different views of the sacrifice, of the sacrificial victim, and the sacrificial blood; the different methods of purification and the expulsion of sin; the ritual of sorrow associated with the death of the god, so powerful in Babylonia and so insignificant (by comparison) in Hellas; the un-Hellenic Mylitta-rite, and the service of the "hierodoulai"; and, to conclude with the most vital difference of all, the manifestations of magic and its relation to the national religions, so complex, so pregnant for thought and faith, and so dominant in Mesopotamia; on the other hand, so insignificant and unobtrusive in Hellas.

Two other points have been incidentally noticed in our general survey, but it is well in a final summing up to emphasise their great importance as negative

evidence. The first concerns the higher history of European religion: the establishment of religious mysteries, a phenomenon of dateless antiquity, and of powerful working in Hellenic and Aegean society, has not yet been discovered in the Mesopotamian culture. The second is a small point that concerns commerce and the trivialities of ritual: the use of incense, universal from immemorial times in Mesopotamia, and proved by the earliest documents, begins in Greece not earlier than the eighth century B.C. This little product, afterwards everywhere in great demand, for it is pleasant to the sense, soothing to the mind, and among the harmless amenities of worship, was much easier to import than Babylonian theology or more complex ritual. It might have come without these, but they could scarcely have come without it. Yet it did not come to Hellenic shores in the second millennium. And this trifling negative fact is worth a volume of the higher criticism for the decision of our question.

Those who still cling to the faith that Babylonia was the centre whence emanated much Mediterranean religion, may urge that the negative value of the facts exposed above may be destroyed by future discoveries. This is true, but our preliminary hypotheses should be framed on the facts that are already known. Or they may urge that the generic resemblances of the two religious systems with which we have been mainly concerned are also great. But, as has been observed, the same generic resemblance exists between Greek and Vedic polytheism. And for the question of religious origin general resemblances are far less decisive than specific points of identity, such, for instance, as the identity of divine names or of some peculiar divine attribute. Later we can trace the migrations of Isis

and Mithras throughout Europe by their names or by the sistrum or by the type of the fallen bull, of the Hittite god Teschub in the Graeco-Roman guise of Jupiter Dolichenos as far as Hungary, perhaps as far as Scandinavia, by the attribute of the hammer. It is just this sort of evidence of any trace of Babylonian influence that is lacking among the records of early Greece. No single Babylonian name is recognisable in its religious or mythologic nomenclature; just as no characteristically Babylonian fashion is found in its ritual or in the appurtenances of its religion. This well accords with what is already known of the Mediterranean history of the second millennium. For long centuries the Hittite empire was a barrier between the Babylonian power and the coastlands of Asia Minor.

So far, then, as our knowledge goes at present, there is no reason for believing that nascent Hellenism, wherever else arose the streams that nourished its spiritual life, was fertilised by the deep springs of Babylonian religion or theosophy.

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